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THE

HISTORY OF INDIA,

BY

JOHN CLARK MARSHMAN.

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PART I.

FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

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TO THE NATIVE YOUTH OF BENGAL.

MANY years have elapsed since I enjoyed the privilege of compiling the first series of elementary books for Native Schools, in association with the Serampore Missionaries, the pioneers of Indian civilization. It is gratifying to contemplate the progress which education has since made among you, and more especially to observe the career of honourable competition which has been opened to you under the auspices of the University of Calcutta. With the encouragement afforded by that body, I have again an opportunity of assisting your studies; and I now present you with an Epitome of the History of India, composed under a deep sense of the responsibility attached to any effort to provide a trustworthy relation of the progress of the power to whom Providence has entrusted the destinies of your country.

JOHN CLARK MARSHMAN.

LONDON,
August 1st, 1863.

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determined by independent and disinterested counsel and sympathetic treatment. It is the same in the Hills as in down-country. They tell us how anxiously I am expected at the capital and by the Durbar, how the city is glad, how the Amlah are speculating, how DHANANJAY Thakoor, the Chief Minister, looks forward to be helped out of his difficult and disagreeable situation in the Durbar, how the officers in general of the Raj reckon upon a "buffer" between them and the bullyism of the Residency, how the Maharaja has postponed everything to my arrival, how the intriguers and adventurers who have brought the State down to its present wretchedness, are in alarm.

The Deputy Collector on deputation for settlement work here, KALI KUMAR CHAKRAVARTI, and the Tehsildar, KALI PRASANNA GUPTA, came down to the fleet to see me; many others too came likewise. A select few were received in the drawing-room of the flag-boat. On the shore a great crowd assembled, the adults saluting

from a distance and departing after a time, leaving the urchins to mount guard as it were, all through. There was no unseemly demonstration, no contortion of limbs, nor expenditure of lung-force. The display of animal spirits is voted vulgar, and before superiors even impertinent. All was strictly Oriental—grave, thoughtful, though with a cheery thoughtfulness. There are no voluble bards in Noornagar. and the howling Fakirs were at Agartala. And the simple villagers have not yet learnt the "address" trick. The reception, accordingly, was throughout pantomimic. There was no European hallooing—no hurry and bustle. The demonstration was marked by philosophical quiet and perfect ease. In the evening a palanquin was brought in and soon after dark I proceeded to the Mugra Rajbari which had been cleaned and illuminated for the occasion, where I held a kind of levée. I did not forget to make business inquiries about the place. I left the Revenue Office for the new office

of settlement at which CHAKRAVARTI presides. I naturally felt somewhat interested in the office as of my creation and in the officers as of my own promotion. Then, KALI KUMAR is a grand master in the Fine Art of complimentary interpellation. Nay, not to be ashamed of giving any being his due, be he Cæsar or Satan, he is politeness itself, with a ready command of an eloquence that is insinuating if not convincing. He entreated me to accept of his hospitality. Although undisposed from temperament and habit to dining out and being, besides, in bad health for the moment, yet the request was made in terms which made refusal impossible. Like so many others, he solemnly declared that I had again come that way in very response to his prayers. He stopped not there, however, but added that *he* was *mine*. *I* had made him, maintained him in the State, advanced him in it, given him influence and means, rank and power. And all this from one who has been four times as many years in the service

as I have—and one of the Maharaja's earlier favorites still enjoying a considerable place in His Highness's kindness, into the bargain! Again and again he protested that he owed everything of value to me, and he now begged of me the crowning favour—to ennoble him by thus publicly accepting of a few poor refreshments prepared by his family—in fact by his own dear Brahmani. He perfectly knew that my holiness as a noble Brahman from the banks of the divine Ganga (Bhagirati) is too pure and exalted for such a prayer, but then through all the Ages the Gods have been kind to their own devotees. Who could have the heart to disregard such an appeal, or turn his back on such a votary!

I give the speech in full as a picture of Eastern manners. It might possibly teach Anglo-Indian rowdies and civil and military scapegraces that there are at least natives and natives (to avoid the more offensive word,) and that we have a politeness and a chivalry of our

own For, it must not be supposed that there was anything degrading in this elaborate demonstration of deference, or the slightest alloy of a base motive in the proferred hospitality.

The house is beautifully situated in a distant corner of the artificial lake for which Mugra is famous. My host tried his utmost to make me comfortable, but his knowledge was not equal to his wishes, and, certainly, the resources at his command fell short of the requirements. He had, however, a high divan, beneath a broad punkah with a light narrow fringe, to seat me in, and my smoking engine and fireman with coke (prepared coals) besides a supply of musked sugared tobacco, accompanied me. Alas! the divan was not fresh and it was backed by a huge and lofty bolster, more suited, like an Elizabethan chair, for state than for lounging against, while the great horizontal fan overhead shook the bamboo beams by which it was held creaking noisily at every pull and threatening destruction. Never mind! Life itself might

be given up in return for the Vedic Hymn with which my host had waylaid me to his house. But there are nuisances not to be endured on any account, and such a one was the apparatus for diffusing light in that apartment. This formidable lamp of unglazed country earthenware, though kept in the corner, was a perpetual torture to the senses. I dodged about in various positions to avoid it, but the stench attacked me still. Finally, I gave up the struggle. As the dinner was ready only in a complimentary sense, if the cooking had yet begun, I begged to be allowed to retire on board, till called for. What a change from the stifling atmosphere of the house to the fresh air of the river! My host and everybody thought we must be miserable on board, but they have no idea of our vessel's roominess and its arrangements for comfort.

July 28th, Monday.—We were roused late at night—too late, indeed! But we asked no questions. It was useless to resist a Vedic Bard in the Kali Yug, and I let myself be conveyed

over the dark and silent beach, to the place of sacrifice. We sat to dinner towards the end of the small hours, and by the time we returned to our dormitory on board, the grey streaks had insinuated themselves into the Eastern heavens. We soon roused the boatmen, huddled together as they were against one another, and sailed, or rather poled, up the stream. It was a wearisome, tantalising journey. The Nabinagar adventure over again! Mugra is fronted by some temples and backed by another. This latter one, belonging to the DAS family, was the landmark which long pursued us after the manner of the steeple near the junction of the Teetas and the Megna. The Howrah has a truly serpentine course. A few small cuts would reduce the distance to almost nothing.

A European missionary who had been up preaching in the Maharaja's territory, came down the stream and went past us. So new is preaching here, that the simple people said

the Padre had been singing in the street.

Agartala at last! At 3 O'clock, we moor near my old Bungalow in New Town—Naya Haveli, as they call it.

Starting from Dacca in the afternoon of the 23rd July, without any halts of my commanding, I reach this capital in the afternoon of the 28th. It would take me the good part of another day in my lumbering craft to reach Old Agartala—Purana Haveli—where the Maharaja now mostly resides. Such, of course, is only the tediousness of travelling *en grand*. A man pressed for time might, in a small swift boat from Dacca, make a much quicker voyage.

AT AGARTALA:

GLIMPSES OF LIFE IN A HINDOO STATE.

As the fleet neared the close of its voyage, the number of the people who came to welcome my return and footed it all the way on both banks abreast of the vessels, became more and more, until the crowd, including many respectable men, was greatest at landing. Most of the officers and clerks and other gentlemen were, however, waiting at my Bungalow. The news of my arrival brought others, and a stream kept pouring in, until I retired late at night. It was so the next day; people were waiting in my house before my appearance. Thus the thing was kept up, from morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve, unto late night, for some days, by

new men dropping in as well as by the same men coming again and again, from an idea of strengthening their interest or at least in the hope of creating influence with the people by a show of intimate connection with the—dog of the day. Fortunately for them, I could afford the leisure for the dissipation, before I saw the Ruler. The stars smiled on them, for the stars did not smile on me as they did not show a favorable time for the inaugural meeting with the Maharaja till some days after. At last, the prescribed day and hour came. I marched to the Maharaja's retreat at Old Agartala three miles off, across the river. Reaching the Presence, I pronounced my benediction and offered the complimentary gift of gold.

Since leaving Dacca, I had no educated company, and there was little prospect of any even at this capital from year's end to year's end. It was, therefore, with agreeable surprise that I beheld at my Bungalow the apparition of a respectable visitor from British India—

no less than the Joint-Inspector in charge of the education of the neighbouring British territory. Baboo DENONATH SEN brought with him and introduced his Deputy, Baboo BIDYADHUR DAS. They were travelling in the down country together, each in his boat, inspecting the schools, till they reached Mugra. From Mugra to Agartala is but a step, and so they poled up to this capital, if only for a peep into the Land of Lotos-eaters, the better to create self-satisfaction in their own activity. BIDYADHUR, who has been long in the Tipperah District, had, during my previous residence here, been well spoken of to me. DENONATH was an old acquaintance. He is a man of mark in East Bengal, though I fear he has scarcely realised the promise of his earlier reputation. We first heard of him in Calcutta in 1875. It was the year of the Prince of Wales's visit. The British Indian Association having prepared a grand reception on the part of the native com-

munity, the Indian League, of which I had the honor to be the Chairman of the inaugural public meeting as well as the first President, proposed, at a great meeting on Christmas-day presided over by the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir RICHARD TEMPLE, to establish a permanent memorial of the royal advent. Anticipating by a decade the present cry for technical education, we purposed to found a great institution for imparting to the people instruction in the sciences and arts with special reference to their practical application to the conveniences and comforts, the wants and elegancies of life. It was in connection with the framing of a scheme that we first heard of the name of Baboo DENO NATH SEN. He was then head of the Dacca Normal School and was understood to have made certain improvements in the weaving-loom by which the famous cloths of that District were manufactured. Afterwards he gave up service to try his patent, but, according to the fate of all originators, he lost money by his

enterprise, after all. Then he was invited to the management of Nawab ABDUL GUNNY and Son's estate, but after a short experience of the new Nawabate, he was glad to return to the fold of Government, in the Education Department Latterly, he again wearied of schoolmastering or rather school inspection and took up charge of the Tipperah State, but he found the disadvantages and difficulties far more serious than those he had encountered in the Moslem's service. The Delhi comfit is difficult of digestion even by the seasoned stomach and SEN got sick at the first bite. In a few months he applied for permission to revert to his proper position in the Education Department of the Bengal Government in which he had earned his laurels and in which I hope higher honors await him

In 1875 he was at the height of his fame, perhaps. His reputation in his part of the country was second to that of no man. And to us in the metropolis it came with all the charm of distance and the prestige of novelty.

Our Eastern friends spoke of him with enthusiasm. Men like the editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* seemed to regard him as about the greatest East Bengali. At any rate, if Dewan KALI PROSUNNO GHOSE was the philosopher of Dacca, Head-master DENO NATH SEN was the great organiser with an original turn. Accordingly, we were pressed to invite him to our deliberations and ask him for a scheme. The pride of the metropolis would listen to no such thing. We thought we knew how to draw a scheme. But I prevailed upon my Calcutta friends to postpone their dignity for the national object. As we expected the bulk of our funds from the East—one gentleman from that quarter having actually subscribed Rs. 40,000—I pointed out the advantage of cooperation of a Dacca brother who commanded influence on that side of the country and who, with a distinct aptitude for industrial arts, was already in charge of a large educational institution. So the Baboo was communicated with. He

expressed himself ready to come over, but he wanted the permission of the Director of Public Instruction. We mentioned the matter to Sir RICHARD TEMPLE and he passed the word to Mr. WOODROW, the Director. In due course, Mr. SEN came. The Calcutta Baboos naturally disliked all this ado for nothing, as they regarded it. For any lurking illwill that may have been harboured against the stranger, Baboo DENO NATH effectually disarmed Calcutta by his genuine modesty. His deportment was all that could be wished. It could not, though, obscure the unmistakable intelligence that beamed in his face.

At Agartala I was pleased to note that his shyness had worn off. In fact, from a staid, shrinking, taciturn man, he had become all forwardness and volubility. In the East, he doubtless felt himself at home, while the experience of so many years could not go for nothing on such an intelligence.

He brought with him a native practitioner

of Homœopathy employed at the Rajbari A native of Jessore, he had long been at Dacca where DENONATH knew him intimately, so now the Joint-Inspector was come the Doctor came down from Old Town to see his friend. This Homœopathist's exterior is not prepossessing, looking as he does like a child of gaunt Famine, but he is favorably spoken of personally and professionally by those who know him Of course, in keeping with the present deterioration of our society, he is deficient in manners, for a rather fashionable physician at an old capital like Dacca, singularly so This was my first sight of him!

I offered my visitors *prosad* of course, but they were not sure of their arrangements and declined. The next day (the 12th) I found DENO Baboo still tarrying in the river, opposite the Political Agency, but he was still undecided, except that he must go up to see the Maharaja at Old Agartala or return to India forthwith. An unexceptional, indeed obvious, propositiou,

in the realisation whereof I could only wish him "God speed!" although, from my local knowledge, being not without my misgivings.

Thus armed with this unfailing alternative resolve, it was still not till the following day that he started in his boat—for the former. He was to breakfast on *Rajbhog*—ambrosial delicacies from the Rajbari—at his friend the Homœopathist's. But, as ill luck would have it, he did not reach Old Town till late in the evening! In consequence, he was detained there the next day. His movements already showed the Zone of the Lotos to which he had strayed.

THE CHRISTIAN VILLAGE IN TIPPERAH:

A Glance at the History of Portuguese Settlement in Bengal and of the Introduction of Artillery to the East.

During my first residence in Tipperah in 1877, I made an interesting "find." This was no less than the discovery of a Christian village in the heart of this frontier hill state. It is a suburb of the capital and bears the significant name of Mariamnagar. Indeed, situated between the Old Town and the New Town, it is, properly speaking, the native Christian quarter of Agartala. It is inhabited exclusively by Indo-Portuguese. Contemptuously ignored by the prevailing majority of the other races and creeds, they are scarcely noticed by new-comers, and, indeed, their physical, moral, and economical condition is so depressing and obscuring that a

man might come and live here for a long time without being struck by an indigenous Christian neighbourhood. Genuine blacks all, without that variety of complexion among them which redeems the swarthiness of the other classes of the population and specially which protects the Aryan pretensions of Hindu and Mahomedan from rebuke, stunted in stature, without education of any kind, without instruction in religion, low in morals, addicted to drink and sexual vice, lost in spirit, poor and comfortless and despised, they give one the idea of Pariahs rather than Portuguese. Unless one keeps all his senses quite wide-awake, he is not likely to suspect any Christianish or *quasi*-European presence. But with ears on the *qui vive*, for anything curious or queer, he would not fail to be struck by the word *Feringi*—the Indian for *Frank*—which he might hear. The Frank here is the socalled Portuguese—in whom you discern very little European manners and still less European

blood. VAN LINSCHOTEN, who came to India in 1583, was already struck by the degradation of his people in the East. At Goa, they "married freely with the ladies of the country," while the priests, by assimilating their views and ways to the superstitions of the natives, were enabled to make numerous converts.* In East Bengal, the conditions of their existence were too rough and precarious for the prospects of true matrimony with the women of the country—to say nothing of "ladies"—or for the progress of proselytism by persuasion. But the suasion of might still remained, and it was freely exercised. The outcasts of Hindu society could scarcely be compromised by any change. It was these that swelled the Portuguese community—from these that the European adventurers, specially the meaner Whites, found their brides. We have in the socalled Portuguese community of East Bengal at this day the descendants of that connection.

* Purchas's Collection of Voyages.

As found at Agartala, the Feringis are, I believe, the descendants of the Indian converts of the Catholic Church under Portuguese auspices—converted *en masse* by force rather than persuasion. They are a miserable-looking and truly miserable people, undistinguished from the rest of the masses, unless by a more sooty black colour and a lower stature, and perhaps a worse mental darkness. Marrying within their own body, they have, by the degeneracy of an originally low type, brought themselves to their present physical and moral degradation. For they are highly exclusive, and proud of their race and their faith, such as they are. Though visibly dying out, and feeling the want of suitable partners in marriage, they would not form connections with other classes, even if any were willing to join their community. In this way, they have preserved the purity of their primitive baseness—to indulge in a necessary Hibernicism in order to elucidate this absurd spirit of

pariocracy.* They show no admixture with the non-Aryan elements of the neighbourhood—no Mongolian taint certainly; their features are Aryan. They look like the lower sort of Mussulmans, and are taken by many Hindus for such. But they hold the Mahomedans in contempt, and, were they not under a Hindu Government, might despise the Hindus too. They are Christians in their way, and are proud of it. They are proud likewise of their origin. Being uneducated, they have no history, but they cherish traditions of their former greatness. Doubtless, they still have, some of them

* I humbly submit for the acceptance of the learned this convenient term to express the aristocracy of the Pariahs—the nobility of the ignoble—the singular phenomenon of the pride of caste of the lowest castes. Sir John Phear's "bhadracracy" is also a useful addition to the Indian vocabulary, but it labours under the great disadvantage that the Bengali word *bhadra* itself is not understood by foreigners. "Pariah" is not only known by Anglo-Indians, but has long been a part of the English language.

at least, a modicum of old Lusitanian blood, however diluted with the poorest Indian—a Homœopathic dose, still potent for pride if for nothing else. For, the Portuguese merchants and corsairs who followed in the wake of GAMA to the East, could not have been attended by many representatives of the fair sex from the Iberian peninsula. Thus, though far from thorough-bred, or half-bred, though not Quadroons nor Octoroons, their claim stands to reason, in some measure. They are, if not Franks, a somewhat Frankish people. They constitute the *debris* of Portuguese Power this side of India. They represent—but feebly, though—the adventurers who, in the sixteenth century, established formidable corsair states in the Bengali coasts and islands, and carried their ravages far and wide on land and water, thereby giving the great Mogul Empire its first serious shock from the outside by the sea.

The Portuguese settled in the second quarter of the sixteenth century in Bengal, where they

established themselves in the neighbourhood of the ancient royal port of Satgong between the years 1537 and 1540. But their power in the Hoogly river was the brief blaze of a meteor: in 90 years all was over with it, their factory sacked and plundered, their stronghold blown away, its defenders killed in the storm, and the rest of the garrison made prisoners of war, the fairer of the fair sex absorbed in the imperial harem and the priests sent to Delhi—virtually as a curiosity of religion. Before that catastrophe which extinguished the Portuguese as a political factor in the Western channel of the Delta, they had become formidable on the Eastern channel and the Eastern and North-Eastern coasts. The country was divided between a number of independent rulers, of whom on the right bank the chief were the Rajas of Chunderdeep and Sripore. When in 1556 RALPH FITCH visited Bengal, the famous ISA KHAN, whose capital was situated some 20 miles to the South of Sonargong, had ac-

quired paramountcy over all the neighbouring chieftains, and he was the Christians' friend. This traveller found the Portuguese settled in that part from almost the middle of the century, and in his time exercising considerable authority. The left or Eastern bank had, from time immemorial, been held by the king of Tipperah. The country along the Eastern coast had long been the bone of contention between Tipperah and Arracan. The Portuguese not only established themselves at the mouth of the Karnafoolee in Chittagong, but one of their sailors of fortune, SEBASTIAN GONZALES, seized the island of Sundeep and raised it to the doubtful dignity of a powerful pirate principality. The king of Arracan was himself a bit of a royal corsair, in his rude way, and doubtless felt an unfeigned respect for the desperate European adventurer as for a famous expert in his own line. Birds of a feather naturally flock together; here the *rapprochement* was accelerated by the Mug's experience

of the stranger's might. Between them, these two friends—*Arcades ambo!*—ruled the entire littoral. Not content with this advantage, they penetrated to the interior, laying the country waste, massacring the inhabitants or carrying them away in captivity—the Christian sailor leaving the unbelieving Mug far behind in this diabolical distinction. This insolence and these excesses at length provoked the attention of the Government of India and the Viceroyalty of Bengal, and hastened the downfall of the evil powers. It was not an easy matter to crush the nuisance. The undertaking taxed all the resources of the richest satrapy of the Empire. The Mahomedan historians are silent as to the reason for the change of capital which at this time took place. But luckily the country had been opend to European trade and curiosity. TAVERNIER who, accompanied by the ingenious BERNIER, sailed down the Ganges soon after the transfer, says that the capital was removed from Rajmahal to Dacca in order to give protection

to the Eastern parts of the kingdom, and the better to meet the Portuguese, who, encouraged by impunity, raided as far up as the banks of the Booriganga. Yet so difficult did SHAISTA KHAN find the task, that he resorted to low cunning and cowardly treachery, so unworthy of a true soldier or man. He divided the allied Portuguese and Arracanese, detaching the former from the latter by lure of better pay. Having employed the Portuguese in destroying the King of Arracan who had become a thorn and pest, he had his useful mercenaries destroyed when he no longer had any work for them.

The race was not, however, and could not be, exterminated. During their day, the Portuguese, specially the mixed breed, had largely multiplied, and formed many settlements in different parts. They did not soon forget their evil traditions. The danger from their depredations on sea to Indian vessels going out to the Bay, in the sixteenth century, may be still traced in Bengali literature in a curious verse, with an

etymological interest, in MUKUNDRAM'S Argosy. Swept out of the sea, the remnants of the Portuguese—the survivors among the vikings and their descendants betook themselves to the humbler, but not the less disgraceful, *rôle* of river-pirates and marauders and robbers in general. They creeped into unfrequented creeks at the head of the Bay; or in secluded forests in the Sunderbuns or the neighbouring islands, whence they issued forth to cruise in the numerous waters of the Delta.

Their barks in sheltering cove below
Lurked for the passing peaceful prow,
Till the gay mariner's *sitár**
Was heard, and seen the evening star;
Then stealing with the muffled oar,
Far shaded by the wooded shore,
Rushed the night-prowlers on the prey
And turned to groans his roundelay!

**Sitár* is the Indian guitar. The Bengali mariner's instrument was rather the *bela* or *beala*—the Bengali violin. The word might be substituted but for its accent on the first syllable.

Thus the traffic in the lower part of the Delta was crushed, as the seaborne traffic had been before. Accordingly, their success at once necessitated and emboldened them to sail higher up, and far and wide, in search of prey. This continued down to a late period in the 18th century. Long after Portugal had ceased to have any connection with this part of India, when even Holland, her successor in the East, was herself struggling to keep up an appearance in Continental India, the rising British in Old Calcutta were wont to save themselves, as best they could, from a sudden surprise by these daring pirates, by the ludicrous primitive device of a chain thrown across the river before the approach to their city from the sea! For the Indo-Portuguese did not confine their ravages on water, but led expeditions into villages and towns. Small parties committed dacoity and even burglary. Down to the earlier years of this century, the "black musty Feringees," as they were called, were the worst *badmashes*—

roughs, bullies and criminals—in the European towns of Bengal and their vicinity. The large lowland tract facing the sea, known as the Sunderbuns, was converted by them to its condition of a howling forest tenanted only by wild beasts and reptiles. Alas for poor Bengal, hemmed in between the Portuguese and Mahratta fires—attacked by land and by water—victim of marauders at home and of fillibusters from abroad! And what must have been the anxieties and insults and wrongs to which our ancestors were exposed during that anticlimax of our country's lot! And what gratitude do we not owe to the *régime* which has given us an exemption so necessary to peace and order.

Of the two, the foreigners were the worse enemy. The non-descript tag rag and bobtail equestrian rabble calling themselves Mahrattas, though composed of various Indian races and creeds, were bad enough, but they quickly relieved the people of their presence, leaving

as fast as their worn-out country ponies could carry them with any little portable prize they could lay their hands upon. Their descent resembled the flight of locusts through the land. The people returned to their homes and resumed their cultivation or harvesting. The Portuguese, on the contrary, lingered in the waters of the Delta and, by scaring away population and industry, reduced a fine fertile tract to a wilderness not yet reclaimed during more than a century of strong government and civilised administration.

That constitutes a damning indictment against a European nation and their degenerate progeny. Yet, no picture can be all shade. And there is another side to the account of this miserable people. The credits may be few, but they are genuine assets.

Notwithstanding all that has been said, it was these old Portuguese who first introduced European arts and skill into India. Bengal in especial owes them thanks as well as

execration. Our language has been enriched by them with a good many important terms. We owe to the Portuguese connection our words for *church, Christian minister, leavened bread, &c.* All our names of modern furniture are Portuguese. Throughout the East, the Portuguese have been the teachers of modern military science. For more than two full centuries, all the gunners in Asia were Portuguese.

In every sense, the first artillerists in the East —the earliest and greatest—were the Turks, whose naval triumphs had filled the world long before the rise of the maritime states of Western Europe. In Asia, the Turks naturally were the Gamaliels of military and naval engineering, at whose feet nations learnt—to whom armies were apprenticed. They were thorough artillerists—gunners as well as gun-makers. It was they or their Persian, Indian or other disciples, that constructed those grand old pieces of ordnance, at Agra as at Agartala, at Dacca as in the Deccan, which, long since

pensioned off from active service, have become objects of popular worship, and which, exhibited as curiosities and relics of bygone prowess and civilization, still fill the beholder with astonishment. At any rate, it is matter of history that the grandest of them all, the *Malik-e-Maidan* or Lord of the Field of Bejapore, 14 feet 3 inches long and weighing 40 tons, was cast at Ahmednagar in 1548, by a Turk Mahomed bin Hassan *alias* Roomee Khan. He was a great engineer and true genius. The Todleben of his age, but without a White Tsar or black to secure his attachment with princely protection, he passed from service to service and from prince to prince, doubtless leaving in his track followers trained under him. In creeping round the remotest corner of the Old Hemisphere to start a through sea-connection for the exploitation of the barbaric East, the Portuguese laid their trust on their fire-arms. They had not only assured themselves of superiority, they had

reckoned on a monopoly and even a miracle. Judge, then, their disappointment when they found the Indians at once provided and proficient! Conceive their mortification when, as sometimes happened, the Indian arms proved more powerful and precise and were better served than their own! Nevertheless, under the operation of the curse from which India suffers, the degeneracy all round which had set in embraced this head too. The old race of engineers died out and the people—their art forgotten and almost their knack lost—were ready to gape at the stranger's success as a marvel and glad to take lessons from him. From that time until the rise of the British, and the casting upon Asia of shoals of adventurers from the European Continent by the great French Revolution and the long wars, the Portuguese remained "master of the situation"—as instructor and gunner. A whole history is preserved in the etymology of a single word. In the early British wars, the queer term *Topaz* turns up again and again.

It meant artilleryman. But it was also a synonyme for Feringee—what would now be called Eurasian. And the Eurasian or Feringee of that day was commonly the Lusitanian or Indo-Lusitanian: *Topaz* in fact is *Topiwallah* or man of the *Topee*—the hat-wearer. The earliest hat-wearers in Indian waters were natives of Portugal.

It was in the same capacity that the forefathers of these Agartala Feringees came. Like other Indian powers, the Raja of Tipperah had his mercenaries. He had in pay Afghan infantry and Portuguese artillery. There have been difficulties with the Pathans, but the Portugese have always been loyal. The seat of Government was never long in the same place, and the Feringees carried their settlement along with the Court. Through all removals and vissicitudes, they have followed the fortunes of the Raja. And they are steadily dwindling with Raja and Raj. At Oodoypore, the old capital, they were

a numerous and important community—now a poor hamlet holds them all and their entire insignificance. They are not even Topazes. Looking too like the Mahomedan peasantry of these parts, in shape and colour as in manners and clothing, they have not the distinction of even a head-dress to recall their European origin.

Almost by an accident, I discovered these "native Portugese" early in my first visit in 1876. I had not yet received my power. Invited to take up the management, I had seen the Maharaja and found him agreeable. There was no room for confidence, notwithstanding. Intrigue was unwearicdly busy. Those who had victimised one minister—even to tarnishing his fair fame with the stigma of corruption—might well hope to keep out another. I repeatedly asked permission to return, but the good Maharaja detained me from day to day with promises of an early settlement. It was the height of the rains, and there was then not

a metalled road ; besides, prudence confined me to the quarters assigned me. I utilised this period of suspense in acquainting myself with the country. My purpose was facilitated by the numbers of men of all classes that visited me or crowded round my house to have a sight of the great new-comer. Inquiring about the supply of liquor, I learnt that the Tipperahs produced it themselves at home by fermenting boiled rice, but that the best kind was made by the Feringees. Feringees? What! were there Feringees here too? I exclaimed, and called for some of them. Thus they came, a wretched half-dozen, of whom only one JOAKIM was worth conversing with. It was lucky perhaps that they were thus brought to my notice. For they were on the point of leaving Agartala "for good." Their fortunes were at the lowest ebb. They had been reduced by death and distress from a thriving community to a few struggling families. Their occupation as gunners had

long since gone, for Tipperah had long ceased to be a fighting power. Beyond a few old pieces, without proper equipment, there was hardly any artillery to speak of. Still they occupied an honorable position in the military service. But latterly they had been elbowed out by Hindustanis, Tipperahs, Muniporees, and last not least by Gorkhas. The Bengalis of low type in Court had no sympathy with a people neither Hindu nor Mahomedan. They found it difficult to maintain themselves, to say nothing of keeping up their Christian position. And now they were crippled in the means of continuing their race. Their own little village no longer afforded a sufficiency of brides for them. They had so far gone down that their brethren in British India would not form connections with them. They were being invited for some years by their relations in Noakhali to come and settle among them, with offers of lands and other assistance. They had at last decided to go. I thought them too valuable

an element in the population for the state to part with them. I advised them to remain, promising, when I was appointed, to attend to their grievances and try to make them somewhat more comfortable. Accordingly, when the opportunity came, I made good my word, as much as possible. I introduced the able-bodied who offered themselves into the military, and maintained them in it almost in spite of the Agency with its exclusive regard for Goorkhas, and gave JOAKIM rank.

The Feringees are at any rate not an ungrateful people. For when next the pastor, who is annually sent by the Church to minister to their spiritual wants, came, they mentioned to him all that I had done or tried for them. Accordingly the reverend Father one day held a mass for my benefit.

This will explain the following entry in my diary of the present visit.

12th September, Friday.—I was visited by Father JUSTIN CLERICI, O. S. B, the Roman Catholic priest of Noakhali, who has come for ministration at Mariamnagar. He is an Italian from the Genoa district who had formerly been in Africa, in Tunis, which he left just before the war. He went to England before he came out to India, where he is now two years. First posted to the Feringee settlement in Bikrampore, he is at present in ecclesiastical charge of the Indo-Portuguese Catholics of Noakhali, where there is a brick-built church and parsonage.

He does not speak English fluently or idiomatically and expressed great surprise at my proficiency. I must have been in England, he thought. The old story! So his Bishop of Dacca and the Rev. Mr. ALLEN, the Baptist Missionary of the same city, said on board the steamer from Naraingunge, when last I was going home from Tipperah in 1881. So Major SMYTH in the train from Calcutta on

my first journey to the far East. So General SHOWERS at Moorshedabad so long ago as 1864, and fifty others, at different times. Devoting ourselves as we do to the language and literature of our rulers, it is agreeable to know that our efforts do not all go for nothing. For the rest, it was their ignorance of native society that disposed these good gentlemen to regard me as a prodigy of linguistic attainments. There are as good fish in the sea as out of it—as good scholars among those who have remained all along within the limits of India's "coral strand" as among those who have ploughed the sounding main. That, much more than the existence in our midst of a handful of men who have returned from Europe, is a significant social fact, and, I may add, an important political factor.

I may here note that in the steamer in question, the two ecclesiastics had hot and interminable controversies, and both constantly referred their polemical differences to me,

complimenting me on my theological knowledge. In the ardour for victory, each protested —this rather confidentially to me—that I knew more of the Bible than the other. If there were other Europeans on board, they were too ungodly. Both the Catholic Church and the Baptist Chapel on board assured me that I more had hope of salvation than the among our scoffers fellow-passengers. Amen!

Father CLERICI was even more surprised to find me talking glibly on Italian affairs, about NAPOLEON III, CAVOUR, GARIBALDI and RICASOLI. The NAPOLEONS he of course claimed as Italians. My sympathy for Italian unity, however, did not receive any response from him. He was entirely a Catholic. He was dead against VICTOR EMMANUEL and bewailed the loss of Rome to the Church and the confiscation of the Temporalty. He was bitter against the seizure of the Estates. Compensation in annual payments was offered but refused by the Pope, hence the missions are in want.

He complained to me as the Temporal Power against a DOMINGO MERCER, Feringee of Mariamnagar, who having committed adultery with a woman from Sylhet, now refused to marry her. Foriadan is his real name. He is 26 years of age, and he eloped with her from the Feringee community of Bondasil in the east of Sylhet. I summoned all the elders to attend and between them and myself persuaded the young man to take her to wife.

It was during the rainy season that I went. Indeed, at any other time of the year I could not make a through voyage. There would not be water enough for any but the tiniest craft, and even these would have to be pulled through the bed by sheer force—and sailing up the Howrah in my budgrow to Agartala would be out of the question. But the rains this year had been scanty. It was proportionately hotter than usual, and day and night one had either to plant himself under the *punka* or to cause

the great palm fan to be waved in the neighbourhood of one's person. At length, the long deferred rains entered appearance. On the 30th August there was a slight preliminary sprinkling. But there were signs in the heavens that the monsoon had burst in Bengal, in the districts washed by the Bay. September opened with clouds and a drizzle. There was no more shying or shamming. The following day the floody Jove turned the screw of his tap and opened his streams on us. And so it went on, from day to day, for days together, raining cats and dogs. At first a relief to all, it gradually proved too much of a good thing; not knowing to stop even there, it finally degenerated into a nuisance. The very husbandmen, who had been before complaining in despair of Nature's niggardliness, and afterwards loudly blessed Heaven as they wallowed in the mire so necessary to the life and growth of their insipid rice plant, the very husbandmen cried *Bus!* Enough! More than

enough! For God's sake, stop! The god of the weather listened. He took them at their word. The rains stopped with a vengeance. Then the drying process began. Alas! we were never to know the *juste milieu*. The golden mean was a dream of the Golden Age. All the moisture was screwed out of us all, earth and air, man and beast. We gasped for breath. We cried like so many weak saints under *auto da fé*. Nor was this the worst of it. In the last week of the month an epidemic arose. The Cholera decimated our ranks. Appearing first among some coolies in the bazaar, it spread, and soon entered the palace. First a servant died, then one of the Heir Presumptive's (Bara Thakur's) *kachooas*—concubines—and another. The matter looked serious. A consternation seized the Rajbari. The Maharaja fled with his immediate family to New Town—the capital proper. It was a most inconvenient time for such changes, on the eve of the Doorga Pooja. We were already in the midst of the introduc-

tory festival when the outbreak commenced. It was difficult to transport and accommodate all the persons and chattels, for the harem is a host in itself. But the situation was urgent, and despotism is capable of revolutionary vigor. Orders were simultaneously given to collect, on the one hand, boats and palki bearers, and, on the other, to put the old apartments in New Town into tolerable repair. Before they were fully executed the move had begun. They were expected here on the 26th September, the opening day of the Doorga Pooja Proper. In reality, the Maharaja and family arrived the next day, the Great Eighth of the Moon, as it is called, or the second day, held peculiarly sacred. Before that the whole place had been deserted by the movable part of the population. All the trades and nearly all the offices are filled by out-siders from British territory. A consternation seized them and they fled. An epidemic of a deadly disease is everywhere a serious matter. Here the

quarrantine that is observed on such occasions, rude and mild as it is, is looked upon with far greater horror. There is better treatment available here, doubtless, than in the villages in Rural Bengal from which most of the residents come. But the Bengali more than any other loves to be with his family, and certainly prefers to die among his own people in his native home than in Paradise itself. Hence the haste to get away; the local difficulties of those post-mortuary rites, without assurance in respect of which no Indian in prospect of death can be happy, strengthening the motive for flight. As they passed my gate, they wondered what I should still be tarrying for in this land of plague, beyond the strict limits of the Hindoo Pale. In their anxiety for safety, they frequently forgot the usual courtesies. Those who caught the eye of any of the superior members of my establishment just looked in for a moment. Others, however, even in their run for life, stopped to secure the

good offices of the great Brahman at such an hour of trial, while many another, with calm prudence, by a momentary halt at my house, in the midst of that retreat of panic, provided for the interests of Number One, in case both sides might be spared. They all came with their parting respects for their parting blessings. They did not leave without loudly expressing their concern for me, and advised and begged and prayed me to depart. Their counsel was the more rational that there would be no business during the vacation, in consequence of the Festival, with or without the Cholera. But I was in no mood for moving, except to go home for good. Besides, nothing could be done without taking leave of the Maharaja, and there was no getting at him during the panic. One gentleman, a landlord of the Bikrampore Riding of Dacca importunately pressed me to leave Agartala and live on board boats in some of the great rivers in down-country till the health of the place was

restored. I had been fairly tired of boating, still cruising in the Megna might have been a temptation in the face of a miserable death, but there were practical difficulties. No boats roomy and convenient were to be had, and by the time they might be ordered up from Dacca, the question of life and death would have been settled. Either I would have turned to ashes or the epidemic would have passed away, leaving me intact. So I maintained my character of fixture, remaining where I was, trusting on God. And I was glad to find my people of the same tranquil philosophy. For, in case a genuine anxiety for life had seized them they would have been sure to desert, with or without notice. We were the only party, of all who were free to go away, who stayed. It was a dismal prospect, with the whole country around weeping and wailing, to be cooped up in our corner, confined to our quarters, without intercourse with the world, the exposed pauper dead, dragged like dead dogs past my house,

being about the only human figures I saw. However, we managed to get on and even to keep up our spirits, without which, indeed, we should certainly have fallen victims to the dire disease. At one time there seemed cause for alarm. One of my people was attacked one morning with purging. So General Cholera had invaded my camp and penetrated into it! My servants were terrified. I had a whole colony of Ooriyas who looked the picture of anxiety and were doubtless ready to flee. Luckily, it proved a case of diarrhœa. The man soon recovered. We had no other domestic complaint or difficulty.

My house is out of town as it were, in what may be called the European part of the town, although just now only one European or East Indian lives here in the person of the doctor who is head of the medical department. It is a lonely enough locality in the best of times, and now not a mouse stirs. The only beings I ever see are two neighbours, a medical ad-

venturer from the North, a jack of all systems, who has just set up here as a native doctor, and a celebrated musician, Kasem Ali by name, descendant of the historic TAṄ SEN of AKBAR'S Court. They had seen many places in India, each in a different direction, and from their intelligence they might be valuable acquaintances if one could be sure of his ground. They balance one another, acting as mutual foils, if not as correctives quite. The Mussulmans of Lucknow, from which KASEM ALI comes—*viâ* the King of Oudh's Colony, Calcutta—are famous for "tall talk," and KASEM ALI Khan avails himself to the full of his birth-right, but for drawing the long bow, this adopted son of Æsculapius from Mymensing will be a match for all the Mahomedan musicians any day. Between the two, I managed to get on pretty lively.

At times nature would rebel. Thus I find my entry 'What a horrible confinement is this! I am literally cooped in my bungalow.' And so on.

On the second of the Festival, I ventured out towards the close of the day as far as the bend of the street and river and took my seat on the public way in front of KASEM ALI Khan's house. He was gone out to pay his respects to the Maharaja, but his woman of a wife (as he has latterly made her, who had been a public singer and, of course, of the *demi monde*,) was good enough to send out chairs and stools for me and my companions, (KUMAD NATH and the doctor,) with spices and odours. The famous dilapidated tin-box, country-made, (and oh how wonderfully!) containing, by hook or by crook, a great quantity of valuable otto of sorts, was laid bare before me, with a candle light placed beside, for us to help ourselves.

I did not stay long there. After my return KASEM ALI Khan came home and followed me. The mystery of the odoriferous Moslem was revealed by him this day. Mahammad (God bless his soul!) loved sweet scents, flowers,

amber and musk, *utturs* and perfumed oils. The Koran recommends perfumes and flowers to the Faithful. A merchant from Aleppo used to visit the Prophet every year, bringing sweet scents for him, and fruit for his grandchildren. Tailoring was then in its infancy; at any rate, pockets had not been invented, sleeves doing their duty. The children used to put their nimble little hands into the traveller's capacious sleeves, stuffed with various delicacies. On one occasion the Angel Gabriel appearing to Mahammad in the guise of the Aleppo merchant with a Sura of the Koran from the Almighty, little Hasan and Hossein as usual ran up to him as to their familiar friend. The Angel took them on his lap. They, as was their wont, searched his sleeves. The Angel inquired of the Prophet what they meant. When it was explained, Gabriel immediately brought down (without leaving his seat) apples, pomegrantes and grapes from Heaven, and offered them to the dear children.

The precept of the Koran and the example of the Prophet recommend as well sweetmeats as sweet scents. Hence the addiction of the Faithful to both. Mahammad loved roses to distraction. When a beautiful Bussorah was given him, he smelt it and placed it in his eyes and his forehead. Hence the religious veneration in which the rose is held, in especial. No good Mussulman will tread on flowers. None will take the rose to his bed even.

20th September.—They are all leaving us! It is particularly galling for the home-loving Bengali to stay abroad during the Great Doorga Pooja. And here this year the approach of the Cholera is an additional motive for clearing out of the place as fast as one can. My only neighbours—of the Agency, next door—too are going. Since yesterday the Baboo's boat is at anchor. This morning a message came to me for permission to my chairmen to palanquin the

Beebee* over to it. Some time after, Baboo UMAKANTA DAS himself called, to take leave for home during the Vacation.

Thus this family escaped the Cholera season. But they exchanged one evil for another. They passed a miserable Doorga Pooja at their Pubna home at Teota—seat of Raja SHAMA SHUNKER ROY, who and his brother PARVATI were associated with me on the Indian League, as among its chief supporters. They all fell ill, as they always do, whenever they go home. Their country seems to be infested with fever. They were glad to get away as soon as they could move, consistently with the health of some of the party.

The first day that I visited him here I found him in a great state of excitement. He sat up in his bed as soon as he saw me enter and insisted on shaking hands with me. His hand

* I consider "Beebee" the true *feminine* of "Baboo," and I hope it may be so used by others as a substitute for "Mrs." or at least by way of a variety.

was hot. He conversed with more than his wonted volubility and rapidity of utterance, whether I spoke or no, coming down on me with a harangue for a simple inquiry about his health. He was not himself, poor soul! It was all his native fever—bred of malaria in the swamps of Pubna. Next day, I found him easier, and he said he was all right. The third day, however, there was a relapse. He again got well, this time without mistake, he hoped. For he had had no fever for two consecutive days and nights, and looked almost hale and uncommonly hearty. Nevertheless it were prudent not to exult too soon. This disease is a mischievous imp that seems to delight in playing at hide and seek with its victims. I better proceed with my diary.

17th October.—As I feared Baboo UMA-KANTA'S fever had assumed a quotidian type and the paroxysm might return today, I became anxious, specially as the poor man is suffering

with his whole family, his house being turned into a hospital. So I sent my Jamadar AODAN SINGH at noon to inquire and was relieved to know he was yet well. In the evening as usual I visited him myself. Found his physician in attendance. The Baboo welcomed me smilingly, saying he was sitting up in bed. I hoped I might never again see him stretched at full length, moaning from ague. As I approached the cot, KASEM ALI Khan, who was sitting beside the patient, got up in my honor and saluted me in style, a courtesy which I returned to the full, while Baboo UMAKANT introduced to me Dr. * * * * *, who rose to meet my proffered hand. I then took my seat, followed by the Doctor, but KASEM ALI Khan still remained standing, as in the Vizier's presence, notwithstanding Baboo DAS'S request to him to sit down, till formally asked by me to take his seat. Of course he preceded the operation with a profound and elaborate salaam. I immediately began to make inquires of the patient

about himself. But the polite Mussulman had not yet done with me. As soon as he got an opportunity, bending over with joined hands, he inquired of my Huzoorship's Temper. I suitably acknowledged his politeness with a grand "Alham d l'Allah! God bless you!" which must have amazed the unsophisticated Doctor and the Political Baboo.

We had then a desultory conversation, among other subjects, on medicine. On that we received no particular light from our professional partner. I was, however, glad to find the Doctor no very heroic practitioner. He had prescribed for Baboo DAS half grain doses of quinine. About the action of the drug he was quite at sea. Nor did he leave any impression of general attainments. For science in general out of the region of the healing art he expressed supreme contempt. Spectrum analysis he had not heard of, as he did not correct me nor seemed to see the mistake when in the hurry of delivery I once called

it "spectroscopic analysis"! But he cared not for it, whatever it might be, saying, what was the good of all these things? He had been in many districts of Bengal and even in the Bay and to the Malayan islands. He had surveyed the Andamans preparatory to its being utilised as a convict settlement and had been twice shipwrecked.

He left me with the Baboo, and thereafter KASEM ALI Khan too went away, for his prayers as Mr. DAS thought, but really to give us an opportunity for any confidential conference we might want. In return for so much politeness and thoughtfulness, I looked in at his house before returning home, sitting with him for two hours or so.

19th October.—Vakil NOBOKUMAR SEN, late State Advocate, visited me on return from a trip to Noornagar to look after a Talook which, he reminded me, I had given him (while making the settlement of the Pargana) and in respect of which I had relieved him (in due course

of business) of certain arrears of rent. Of course he saw his friends down country. One and all, rich and poor high and low, inquired, whether I had been invested with the ministry with full authority, saying they were on tiptoe of expectation and ready to burst out in joy. As soon as they heard of the commencement of my administration they would call to present their respects.

SEN related his sufferings on the trip. He complained of the new mosquito plague. Mosquitoes were never rare birds in the country, but they have multiplied to an inconcievable and intolerable extent. The air is filled with the stink of jute—it was impossible to breathe —not a square inch of pure air is to be had in the whole country. How the people managed to live, he wondered, said he. It was worse than dung—the jute decomposition. Worse than the vilest animal excreta! he exclaimed. My own language! thought I, as I remembered my experience on a Doorga

Pooja evening at Jonye, when walking from the boat to the mansion of the MOOKERJEES, I was obliged to run for life from the stench.

SEN got no fish to eat and had to live on pulse, which is the detestation of the Eastern Bengali who, by the way, don't know how to cook it. The minute fry which nobody except paupers touched, was welcome to the table of the richest. There is no fish, in consequence of the state of the water from jute decomposition. I wonder whether Government ever heard of this fish famine. What is Mr. DAY—the salaried fishmonger about? Here is a bad prospect for fishy Bengal.

21st October.—I assist my Ooriahs in filling up their P. O forms for remittance :—

Zilla Balasore, P. O. Dhamnagar, Police Outpost Roipur, Pargana Káimá, Mouza Moá, Remitter—Náth Dás, to Hádibandhu Poira, Rs. 10. Also Rs. 18 to Lakhan Bearer in Mouza Bhuipur, in the same Zilla &c., from Punand Bearer, Agartala, remitter.

Again Rs. 10 to Bonamali Palái, Mouza Pahná, same Zilla, &c., from Dám Palai, Agartala. The other day I wrote for one Oorya servant, and KUMAD NATH, I believe, wrote for another. One other then remains to send thus his rent.

With the exception of one who belongs to Patámóndi, (formerly belonging to the Babóos of Taki and Baranagore, then of the SINGHS of Calcutta, now the estate of the late Raja DEGUMBER MITTER, C. I. E.,) all my Ooryas are tenants of Baboo NIMAI CHARAN BOSE, Roy Bahadoor, of the family of the great millionaire KRISTO BOSE.

Went to the Rajbari, New Town. Sat in Bara Thakur's room seeing books and photos The most interesting of the latter were portraits of the Maharaja from negatives taken some ten years back by a French artist who gave himself the classic name of Apollonius or Apollonais (or was it the whole hog, Appelles?) —the same whom the present Mrs. * * * * had

accompanied as wife, though she now flies in the face of the suggestion, protesting she never had been in Tipperah or, for that matter, in East Bengal at all! As if the Maharaja's artist's eye could make a mistake in identity of that kind! They are all good likenesses of the Maharaja at his best, representing a noble-looking Aryan Prince that he is—a good specimen of a Bengali gentleman—in youthful health and freshness, without anything of the worn-out aging expression which is invading his countenance of late years.

The Bara Thakur made me a desirable present of some two dozen unmounted photos, copies of larger photos and pictures from Europe, as well as prints from original negatives in his possession, consisting of ethnic studies and scenes in Tipperah. His own photo formerly taken by APOLLONAIS does not at all remind one of him. Not only is the complexion darker in the picture but the features seem somebody else's.

I ought to note that as soon the Bara Thakur saw me he enquired of JOGESH and SATIS whom he had seen at Calcutta, before I could convey their *pronam.* He has seen the newspaper notice of poor NORESH'S death, and spoke of it with feeling. He was also good enough to say he had read with pleasure and profit the account of my Trip from Calcutta to Dacca published anonymously in the papers.

I was then called up to the Presence. Footing up a long broad flight of rather deep stairs, straight after the first few steps, to the upper storey, I passed through a room filled with valuable goods in glass-ware, cabinet-ware, ivory-work, gold and silver plate, with musical instruments, scientific instruments, &c. I was next ushered into a large and airy verandahed room furnished, indeed only less crowded with furniture,—towards the centre a charming ivory chair beside an indifferent mahogany table surmounted by a costly clock under an old fashioned chandelier,—here a

neglected piano, there a brand new first class microscope,—rich carpets and hangings heaped up in a corner, a silver half-drum *(bayan)* and a full-drum *(pakhawaj)* mounted with ivory balls, in another,—guns in boxes and guns without, swords naked and sheathed, shields and spears of sorts, paint boxes, stereoscopes, opera-glasses, leather bags and carpet bags in profusion,—telescopes leaning against walls or lying about on the floor,—and what not besides,—on a side whereof I found His Highness seated on the Indian bed of comfort and state called *gadi*—a roomy mattress stuffed thick with cotton-wool—backed by an enormous round bolster and flanked by diminutive flat pillows. After the preliminary mutual greetings, as soon as I had taken by permission my seat on the rich Persian carpet specially placed for me, His Highness first enquired of my health and then mentioned the illness in his house.....

Last Sunday being Dewali or Kali Puja, they

expected me to illuminate my Bungalow as on previous occasions when I stayed here. As I am a loyal conformist, even to paying the periodical Bukshish to the Rajbari servants, I thought I should not decline the obligation of lighting up my premises. I gav my people orders accordingly, and to do the thing on as great a scale as before, with if possible still better taste. Thus my place was grandly illuminated, with better effect than the Rajbari lighting—which is nobody's business. The only check on neglect and *loot* there—that of the master's eye—was absent. The Rajbari servants doubtless knew that it would be so: at any rate, they could make it so, without rousing the suspicion of their masters of playing into menial hands. His Highness never comes out, and this time even the Princes did not stir out. Nay, my neighbour-friend KASEM ALI Khan, who usually comes this way, did not step out—why, I wonder. Is it because he did not light up his

house? I took a walk in the evening to go round my grounds and go out to the streets to see. In passing Khan's place, I met him sitting with SULLOO, once a professional athlete now a travelling shawl seller, in his verandah. He seemed to be morose, or he would certainly have joined us.

On this visit I observe a change in domestic and commercial architecture in the East—namely, the use of corrugated iron in roofing. It has penetrated to these hills even. In 1881 I caused some dissatisfaction by my order for covering the grass or reed thatching of the shops at Agartala with a thick matting of bamboo splinters. My object was obvious—to minimise the number and extent of the fires that occur in a land of combustible bamboo and grass houses, specially during the dry months, reducing all personal property to an uncertain possession, and making life miserable from anxiety from day to day and from hour to hour. I hoped at least to prevent a general conflagration from

the living cinders of straw or burning grass and bamboo chips wafted by the air to other houses. Yet the leading tradesman (SRINIBAS Shaoo of Dacca) alone readily and cheerfully submitted to my proclamation. Within these three years they have all progressed in civilisation beyond my immediate expectation. The nearest approach to iron roofing that I remember having seen in 1881, was in a private house in the Manipooree quarter, where an ingenious man had given the thatch of his hut for his god a tinned plate covering by collecting a number of apparently rejected empty tin cases and piecing together cuttings from them! This time I saw at Mugra two new rooms belonging to RAM SUNDAR BHUIA of this city (managing partner of the shop known as Hole Sen Company, corruption I fancy of Wholesale Company) with spelter roofs. Here too I observe several shops adopting the same. I hear that at Comillah, Mymensing and other cities all the shops have got

this roofing—no other is allowed by Magistrate or Municipality. It is being introduced into the country at large too, as distinguished from the country towns—not in vanity but purely as a protection from fire. The commencement of this improvement dates not beyond the last four or five years. It has become general within the last two years. I am glad to think that I paved the way for it in this State.

7th November 1884, Friday.—We were talking of the health of the season. All three, KUMAD NATH, the Doctor RAM CHUNDRA, and myself, complained of headache. The doctor attributed it to the atmosphere, adding that it made people occasionally feverish I certainly feel this slight feverishness at times. He complained of the water here, saying that, with the exception of the Agency pond, there is no good water to be had anywhere. Other artificial waters may look clear, but on bathing you immediately get aching at the back of your head. It is all non-

sense, the outcome of ignorance and the Bengali prejudice against hills!

This, to be sure, is a time of year particularly unfavorable to health. The season is bad everywhere in Bengal. Some parts of the country become particularly dangerous. In Dinajpur and Rungpur, there are fever cases in profusion. It is, said the doctor, a bad type of fever, commencing with typhoid symptoms, soon developing convulsions and in 3 or 4 days making an end of life. In Mymensing it is nothing at all like that, though there is bad health generally and many cases of fever occur, as in other districts.

CURIOUS CUSTOMS.

[*My Diary at Agartala continued, under date the 7th November, 1884.*]

AS in other countries so in this, there are popular practices peculiar to the several seasons. I heard of a curious custom of the border districts of the North. The people make a human effigy of straw, large as life, and stick a long bamboo in its back. This image they set up on the last day of the month of Kartik and carry it about with beat of drum and fanned with winnowing fans, until they dismiss it with many indignities, as the Evil Genius of the Season evidently—with this address—*Come Good! Begone, you Ill! And death to mosquitoes and flies!*

It is true that this is the time of mosquitoes, flies and insects of all kinds, which are a great

nuisance at night specially. With the close of the Indian month of Kartik, corresponding roundly with October, their strength is reduced to a minimum. In Calcutta, as in the cities of Upper India, the illumination on the great Dewali festival destroys most of them. Hence the illumination probably, in its origin. The passion of these poor minute beings for light is proverbial in the East, and has been the theme of no end of poets and poetasters. They prove their devotion unto death. Like the fabled Phœnix, they commit suicide in flame—expiring on the breast of their love. Thus they die in vast numbers. The massacre is completed by the cold weather which soon after sets in.

The most astonishing custom mentioned to-day was the carnival of the women held on the last day of the month of Kartik. Doctor RAM CHUNDRA, with a patriotic regard for the credit of his own native place, denied it as regards Muktagacha, but he could not relieve the

country, confining it to the more upland and jungly parts. On that evening—on which metropolitan Bengal, with more civilised rites, worships the Indian Mars turned to a silken knight—the Garos, Haichongs, Rajbansis and other hill men descend to the plains for fun. The orgies are held in every house, but they rage most at the Rajbaris—the greater landlords being locally "Rajas." The women of the hillmen join the ladies in nude dances and voluptuous gestures and songs and wild revelry.

Now I am on the subject of curious customs, I may as well add some derived from reliable sources. By curious customs I mean, without prejudice, such as do not exist among us. One cannot help staring at a novel practice, but unless it is gross or revolting or absurd on the face of it, we have hardly a right to condemn it. To ridicule it, is rank bad taste. All customs arise in the circumstances of a country often out of the necessities of the people. They are thus the most authentic memorials of

their life—as good as historical documents. Inquiry into conflicts of curiosities in customs and manners has always been a favorite study with the enlightened. Less attention, however, has been given to interprovincial varieties—to mark the difference of practice on the same subject in different parts of the same countries or among different communities of the same people. The interest of the inquiry is obvious—its importance cannot be exaggerated. Without it there is no true knowing—no thorough grasping of a people.

To our West Bengal notions, in East Bengal the relations between the sexes seem changed—those between a man and his elder sister-in-law (wife's sister) are entirely reversed. On the banks of the Hooghly she is respected, but with no abject trembling deference. On the contrary, the intercourse is free and easy, and a good deal of latitude of converse and conversation is allowed between them. Interchange of pleasantries between them is one of the en-

joyments of the Hindu's married life. It is certainly one of the prime attractions of a young bridegroom's earlier years at his father-in-law's. It serves to lighten the dreary years of betrothal rather than marriage—the period of probation following the formal union and completed in the actual consummation—during which the girl-wife progresses to maturity. No such thing in the severe East. There is unknown the poetry of the Western marital existence. There all familiarity is interdicted. For there the sister-in-law takes rank with the mother-in-law. Catch any romantic young man irreverently speaking to his wife's elder sister and his reputation is gone, as hers too unless she took offence at the unheard of liberty! She does not even make her appearance before her brother-in-law. The right, prevalent in our part of the country, of chaffing between such relations, is not only not recognised in the East, but is reckoned a great barbarity.

All the wife's elder kinsfolk are regarded

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with particular respect. Her elder brother shares the distinction of her elder sister. The *Bargiré*, as he is termed, is the most favoured relation. Of course, the Tipperahs in this follow the Bangals, as the Eastern Bengalis are, without particular opprobrium, called by them, as indeed they call themselves.

Such differences in custom may be found throughout the Continent. I may fitly end this subject by citing a custom of the far West towards the Middle Land of Manu, in Upper India. In Hindostan, specially in and about Bundelkund, the younger sister—I do not mean the wife's younger sister, but the younger sister in the ordinary sense—is the revered relation. This may excite surprise as something novel, but I hope no reproach. To me it seems a most beautiful custom. Herein is the romance of Hindu life! Every man bows down to his younger sister. What an anomaly that, among such a people, it should ever have been customary to massacre the daughters at their birth!

The truth is, that it is the very consideration in which daughters were held that led to their wholesale murder.

I have come upon a rather interesting piece of information. It is in respect of the locality of a custom I had heard of from my childhood. It was a common remark with our countrymen of the banks of the Hooghly, when airing their superiority over our brethren of East Bangal, that in the East even Brahman widows were accustomed to eat dried *koi* fish roe, or rather to season their cookery with it. I have been inquiring for a long time to ascertain whether it was a fact or a mere calumny. I was repeatedly assured by my countrymen of the West, but Eastern Bengalis always professed ignorance. Today UDAY told me incidentally that beyond the Fenny river, in Chittagong, the Brahman widows eat fish. They give a reason for it, saying that virgin widows—girls who lose their husbands before puberty—might eat fish without sin. In

reality, all widows eat it without distinction. In that quarter, they cure and pound shrimps to powder and use it as seasoning and as a welcome substitute in the absence of fresh fish. This substantially accounts for the roe story. Still the *chingri* powder is not *koi* roe. Nor is there any *koi* to speak of in the South. I suspect the *koi dimbo* must be used in Sylhet, which abounds in this fish.

[*Diary of the 7th November 1884, concluded.*]

From New Town to Kasba is ten miles, thence to Nyanpur six miles, and thence to Comillah sixteen miles—says Dewan RAJ MOHAN MITRA, who is now with me. * * *

At dinner, conversation turned on the meanness of these people. Mention was made of one of the favorites who has been here before but did not think it necessary to be polite so long as he hoped that the efforts of himself and his brother intriguers would keep me out of the state. On his present visit too he has

been unceasing in his endeavours to poison the Maharaja against me and otherwise to prevent my installation in office. Of course, he can never imagine that I can be serious in my desire to return home as quickly as possible, or that I am not at all anxious for the place, any more than he can understand that, if I show signs to the contrary, it is simply in polite and loyal response to the extreme graciousness of language in which His Highness's offer is couched, the handsome, even extravagant terms in which he speaks of my former services to this state and of myself as the ablest and most accomplished man whom he has come across from Agartala to Brindaban! Be that as it may, directly this Daccaite realises the fact that the Maharaja is determined to have me and that the very papers of appointment are ready and in the press, he is all submission. The other day, before the Maharaja himself, in answer to my usual formal inquiry

about the day of his arrival, he apologised to me for not having been able, in consequence of the darkness of the night, to wait on me on his way up to Old Agartala! Darkness of night, indeed! Why, the man wanted to learn at Old Agartala how matters stood with respect to me at court before he would think me worthy of courtesy or even give me my dues as a Brahman! Was it dark on the previous occasion—nay, two previous visits—both on coming and going away? But enough of these shameless louts!

LAST DAYS AT AGARTALA.

Monday, 1st December, 1884.—I have been suffering from a severe cold. On Saturday His Highness sent a pressing invitation to see him that evening which I was obliged to decline, but promised to strive next day and only hoped His Highness might permit me to visit him in the day. Accordingly at 1 O'clock at night His Highness's reply came telling me to see him in the morning, which I did. That is, I started at half past 10, reached the Rajbari at about a quarter past 11, and saw the Maharaja a quarter or so later. His Highness came upon me in Bara Thakur's room accompanied by his Secretary. Several letters and papers were laid on the table, and my opinion on each matter was required.

* * * *

A letter from the Native Committee for the reception of Lord RIPON and for a suitable memorial was read by the Secretary. The movement is headed by Maharaja KOMUL KRISHNA, Nawab ABDOOL LUTEEF and the Rev. Dr. K. M. BANERJEE. I also, from my own private correspondence, informed His Highness that Mr. W. C. BONNERJEA and Kumar INDER CHUNDER SINGH are working most zealously in the matter. I am sure Messrs. GHOSE and PALIT of the bar were seconding them heartily. In fact, "it is the cause—it is cause, my soul!" though not in the Shakespearean sense.....

By order I send a sowar to Comillah to wire the following telegram from the Maharaja of Tipperah to Nawab ABDOOL LUTEEF Khan Bahadoor—

"Although following the custom of my family I would not be party to any foreign movement, far less embroil myself in the passions of politics, the Viceroy's business is an exception. Lord RIPON has so endeared himself to the Princes

and People of Asia that it were churlish in any one to refuse any tribute to him, on this, that, or the other punctilio or plea of prudence I accept your invitation, therefore, and thank you for this oportunity of testifying my high sense of the noble Marquess' invaluable services to the Imperial Crown and his unfeigned zeal on behalf of the millions subject to his influence."

Thursday, 11th December, 1884.—Yesterday was kept here as a Ripon Jubilee, in honor of the retiring Viceroy The public offices were closed. In the evening, a grand Durbar was held by His Highness the Maharajah, who took his seat on an ivory state chair under a canvas awning, among his nobles and people. Unfortunately he fell ill under the unusual excitement and strain and could not continue long in his seat, which, however, he did not leave till the meeting had heard two short speeches at least on Lord RIPON'S Government.

Friday, 12th December.—Yesterday I was

asked to telegraph an account of the Ripon Durbar to the Press and to the Viceroy This responsible and difficult duty I discharged as well as I could. I drew up an account of the Agartala meeting commencing with its origin in the Maharaja's regard from the beginning for the retiring Viceroy It looked nice enough, but it was formidable for length. So I cut it down to admissible proportions. The most trying part of the business was the telegraphing to the Viceroy. Great tact and delicacy were required to avoid giving offence or making a tomfoolery of the whole business. I managed it thus. Instead of sending an account of the demonstration to the Viceroy, the Maharaja sent a parting message to Lord RIPON (whom he had seen on his return from the Brindabun pilgrimage) expressive of his high regard for His Excellency both as ruler and as man and for Lady RIPON as a worthy consort, and of his prayer for a safe voyage and good wishes for here and

hereafter. This was followed by the following message

"*From* DR. SAMBHU CHUNDER MOOKERJEE,

Agartala.

"*To* THE PRIVATE SECY. TO THE VICEROY,

Calcutta.

"It might interest His Excellency to know that this Border country in the East shares the universal gratitude to his Lordship for the justice and wisdom of his administration and has joined in the demonstration. Yesterday was kept up in Independent Tipperah as a jubilee in his honor. The Maharaja has always felt the highest regard for him. When in 1881 all India, thratened with the abrupt close of a promising career, was wiring constant enquiry, the Maharaja quietly vowed to his gods. So sacrifices were offered to the Guardian Deity of Tipperah on the Viceroy's recovery. Yesterday the public offices were closed and there were illuminations and music and rejoicing in honor of the Viceroy. His Highness held a grand

Durbar of his nobles, officers and people, including British subjects staying here, at which the merits of the Viceroy's administration were extolled. A sacrifice to the gods has also been ordered for the safe return home of his Lordship and her Ladyship."

This evening went to take my final leave of the Maharaja, but to my ill luck found him unwell. So he has been ever since the meeting, as he told me I was for bidding my last *ashirbad*, but he wished to have another interview

Saturday, 13th December.—Called again on the Maharaja at old Agartala. Heard he was still unwell, and indeed found him worse than before. He was panting, and was surrounded by drugs, indeed plastered over with Belladonna and the whole Pharmacopœia, though the treatment had done him no good. How I wished to relieve him by scraping out his plasters and throwing them and the medicines in the room out of the window! * * * *

After midnight I got my discharge, God bless the Maharaja! No sleep till morn when one has to prepare for going home! Col. SIB SING came and found me sitting up with His Highness's work at half past 2 in the morning.

THE LAST RETURN.

Sunday, 14th December.—Started from New Town at about half past 6. Reached Mugra Rajbari in an hour or so by *palki*, accompanied by sepoys, and a lot of followers and sightseers, AODAN SINGH Orderly on elephant, leading, an officer on foot on each side of me, followed by my servant LAKIR Khansama on horseback, Mr Deputy Registrar BANERJEE coming through the tortuous Howrah by boat, and from time to time coming upon us, and PITAMBER SINGH Orderly bringing up the rear with other boats laden with luggage and effects. Talking with my companions or with villagers met on the route, I scarcely perceived the distance. Received at the office by all the officials headed by Dewan

DOORGA PRASAD GUPTA, Tehsildar KALI PRASANNA SEN, Tehsildar (former) GAUR MOHAN BARMAN and others numbering 25 to 30, all coming down to my feet and pinching the dust of them though encased in thick woollens. Deputy Collector KALI KUMAR CHAKRAVARTI soon after appeared, to exchange greetings on more equal terms. Among the officers and staff I remarked only one Brahman.

DURGA PROSAD would have kept me at the Rajbari, and proposed to make arrangements for my dinner, but I was alarmed at the thought of living within easy reach of a recall. So I hastened to my launch in the Teetas. I was carried in my palki through fields and waste lands and round water-courses. Passing by a field of mustard in flower I inhaled a most delightful perfume, more grateful, because fresh, than the costliest Gazipore.

Monday, 15th December.—We came to Gokarna at about 9 in the morning. An hour or so after, on the way down met a country boat

with the wellknown semicircular roofing of split bamboo, bearing the ruler of India east of the Megna. The Collector Political is making his gubernatorial tour, and just now coming from Brahmanberia, I presume, to Nabiganje, for inspection. The vessel, more snug than roomy, could not well hold a full Collector—the whole —man, with his traps, and it was not put to the trial. As, after the good people at home in the Emerald Isle who allot the best quarters in the house to the pigs, the health and appearance of the solid-leather portmanteau and the shining dressing-case could not be allowed to suffer by exposure, I saw the great man, in whose presence Rajas and Bahadoors trembled, in part protected by the curved shed, stretched on his Procrustean bed of an uneasy chair, his nether limbs sticking out in the open air. That shows how ill we are served in the country: for the commonest comfort you must go to the provincial capital or the still more distant metropolis; Mr. Collector could not get a decent boat with-

out sending to Dacca. I am sorry to be caught in my superior accommodation and equipment, thoroughly provided. I thought he hid himself with his newspaper broadsheet on seeing us playing at chess and smoking away out of our long snake-pipes. I do not blame his irritation. The contrast was too much for human nature. But I am not to blame, and I dare say he will soon recover his equanimity. At all events by the time he becomes one of the Principal Secretaries or the Lieutenant-Governor, I hope he will not remember that he ever was packed in a Bengal wherry on an Eastern river.

First sighted the well-known steeple at Nabinagar at about 2 P. M. At 4 P. M., on the right saw a field of shining stars as it were—the most beautiful sight of the kind I ever beheld. It could not be Sarsa or Til, for the plants are taller. Nor were they safflower, for these flowers were yellow while safflower is more red. The boatmen said they are flax—*sone* or *sunn*

—or, as they said, what they made rope of for rigging ships.

It is near evening, and they say we are in sight of the Megna.

We pole on till half past 7, when we reach Marchekandi where they would stop. We are for proceeding further, as far as possible, but it is not considered safe to venture beyond to-night. Even if we succeeded in passing Chorpara by this evening, still we would be scarcely safe. Our halt for the night would be on dangerous ground, or rather waters. In fact, the whole Megna is peopled on both banks by suspected Mahomedans. This Marchekandi is a rather considerable place and lots of boats are congregated here for safety. Still we are too near the Megna, and all night we are kept up by fear of pirates. I have disposed my men for an encounter in the event of the enemy entering appearance.

Tuesday, 16th December.—Left our moorings at dawn to launch ourselves on the great

Megna, now shrivelled up considerably. The great river was calm like a stagnant pool, not a ripple to break the dead level of water, nor a whiff of air to tempt the mariner to bring out his canvas from its hole in the hold. We dragged our slow length along, poling, but for the most part *gooning*, till in the afternoon we sighted the steeple of the Nags of Barodi in Sonargong—the only artificial landmark for miles in the surrounding country since we left the Nabinagar temple. I wonder the Surveyor-General's map does not note these steeples. Towards evening, I espied another minar, on the same side. What can it be? The sailors said it was the steeple of Panam Before sunset, we entered Minakhali, not without hesitation, for there is very little water. At the mouth the streamlet is divided into two channels. That close to Baidyabazar we did not attempt, but entered the other one. Slowly wending our way, we reach the old channel of the Brahmaputra, in which we stop.

Wednesday, 17th December.—Going to bed after 1 O'clock I rose at 4-50 this morning, and ordered the mariners up. It was cruel to disturb the poor fellows doubled up cozily within their slender beddings, but I am in no mood for procrastination. And after idling for a whole month, during which they have only calculated demurrage against me, surely they ought to show some alacrity by way of thankful return. Nevertheless, they show no disposition to leave their beds. I am at them, however, setting LAKIR and my Sepoys upon them till they awake, arise, and be at their work, and the boat is fairly moved out of its moorings

We slowly descend down the decayed Brahmapootra straight towards the Dhuleswari. The passage through Bandar is not now navigable. We are on the old channel of the great river which once swept past Sonargong in all its glory. The Brahmapootra now noisily bounds past Serajgunge through the Jumoona to join the Ganges below Goalundo. Hence the

former course, which takes a sudden turn through the country eastward, defining as it proceeds the Southern boundary of the District of Mymensing, to fall into the Megna at Bhoirub Bazaar, was reduced in force and volume. The passage through Sonargong, which I take to be the older course—more ancient than even the stream that meets the Megna at Bhoirub Bazaar—has long, long been obsolete. Yet, at this part, I see it in unexpectedly good form and condition, whatever may be its state above the ruins of Sonargong city. The old bed—in its grander proportions—may still be distinctly traced between mutually distant parallels of answering forest trees on both sides, but the greater part is now mere sandbank, high and dry, with scarcely any vegetation to speak of, the remainder—a narrow minimum—being water. Although thus the great Brahmapootra, in its original course, has dwindled down to its lowest depth and smallest breadth, it is still a respectable dry-season stream, a goodly river,

as good, in fact, as the Teetas—at places as broad as the Bhagirathi at Moorshedabad. In the rains, it doubtless beats the Moorshedabad river by several breadths.

The sun rises as it set last evening—a glorious spectacle!—a study in colour which would baffle all the TURNERS!—to my Bengali imagination a red hot gold plate for a dish of odoriferous Himalayan rice boiled in saffroned butter for the table of Indra, the highest of the gods!

We have reached the confluence of the many waters in the neighbourhood of Naraingunje!

Leaving Naraingunje in the distance to the right, we cross in south-westerly direction over to the opposite bank, still busy with the annual Fair held on the sandy beach, down to the water's edge. The combined waters of the Dhaleswari and the Lakhya, and of the slender Brahmapootra, constitute a goodly prospect—an ample but irregular-shaped liquid plain extending in front of the barracks of Peace on its edge on *terra firma*. To our right is a vast arc traced

by the giant thatched warehouses for storing jute in, the long huts for marts of agricultural produce in general, and the brick houses and factories—with lofty chimneys sending up smoke to the skies—of the Europeans in and about Naraingunje. The scene is enlivened by the numerous boats and sloops and steam launches and other equipages—of convenience, comfort or luxury—of commerce. Now a barque winds round the sands from Naraingunje towards Dacca and again a statelier river goddess —my old love, *Princess Alice* herself—from the latter city steams down the Dhaleswari. While tiny craft—water gigs propelled by fiery ponies rather than horse power—are running backwards and forwards from shore to shore. The *Princess Alice* flies at a vigorous rate, now unencumbered by the heavy company of flats. I wonder what she is about. Possibly, she is going to fetch up a flat or two, for attendance on her passage to Goalundo. The whole is an exceptionally busy port for humdrum halt-

ing Bengal. As we near land, the long stretch of sheds of the Fair on the opposite bank gain in distinctness on the eye. As the enchantment of distance fades away, they appear in all their naked hideousness, being only structures of dry bamboo and bamboo matting, improvised for the occasion without any effort at symmetry or neatness, and beyond the most distant dream of colour. By 8-30 in the morning, we reach the bank and stop.

I send up a party on a reconnoissance. They are not only to bring information about the Fair but also to make arrangements for a run to the ruins of Rampal, the ancient capital of ADISUR and the SEN Rajas. The old lake there, on whose bank the tree is said to stand which was revived by the random touch of the spiritualised grass and corn offering of the five Aryan Rishi emigrants from Kanouj from whom the Brahman aristocracy of Bengal are all descended, is fit pilgrimage for a Koolin Brahman.

I hear the sound of a tomtom. A messenger leads the drummer, proclaiming the Fair at an end and directing the merchants and traders to shut up shop and break up camp, denouncing punishment if they don't remove their sheds and goods with themselves by tomorrow morning.

While my men are gone on shore for enquiry, I employ the interval in making some observations on the localities of these parts and taking

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A FEW NOTES ON THE

GEOGRAPHY & CARTOGRAPHY

OF

EAST BENGAL.

We want a good map. I have examined many, but have found not one satisfactory. The Surveyor-General's map on the large scale is defective in many respects. Not only are the names frequently misspelt, but they are as often misplaced as not. I refer to the minor places of course. Besides this confusion, many important names do not even appear at all. The plan is answerable, in a great measure, for this contemptuous treatment of geographical notables. It is, for instance, a great mistake not to mention the Pergannas, which are not only in use in official records, at least in the transactions of the people, but

which form the basis of popular geography. The wellknown names of Bikrampore, Chunderdeep, &c., which frequently occur in the conversation of the people, are nowhere. The different designations of the same place are rarely noted. The older maps are good in this respect. Thus Captain TAYLOR'S Post Office map (founded on TASSIN), for instance, has "Suwarra or Nusseerabad *or Mymensing*"; "*Bulloah or Noacally*"; "*Contay or Hidjelee.*" The Surveyor-General's map, if I remember aright, gives Sudharam as another name for Noakhali, but omits Bhulluah. TAYLOR not only shows Lucknow but Constantia—General MARTIN'S place—also. I doubt whether the Surveyor-General's people would recognise such a private place. There is not a more important minor place in these parts than Baidyabazar where the Minakhali joins the Megna, but it is ignored by the Surveyor-General's map. Instead of it, we have Haria, of which we never hear while Baidyabazar is on every lip. Al-

though the ruins of old cities like Sonargaon and Agartala are noted, existing monuments are generally passed over in silence. "The Raja's two-storied house" at New Agartala is named in full, but the Rajbari and muts at Comillah do not appear. The residences of the old Tipperah Viziers at Singer Bil, of the ROYS of Kaitala, of the Dewans of Beetghar, and of PADDO LOCHAN Dewan, all in Pargana Noornagar, of the older Dewans, and of the Moulvis in the Pargana of Mcherkool, some of them imposing structures, and all substantial, are, of course, not to be found in these large maps on the scale of four miles to the inch. These edifices do not deserve contemptuous treatment because they are private. In a land of thatched houses, mostly miserable huts, they are of great geographical importance. They take rank as landmarks. They are the first-class landmarks, in fact. For here there are no prominent natural features even; no lasting hill ranges nor mountain

peaks. Such physical features as the country possesses, are not very pronounced. In a land of corn, reed and grass, there are not many trees to speak of; and such as there are, they are liable to be cut down or to decay or to fall down and be swept away by water. But if any delicacy might be felt about incorporating private buildings in the official atlas of the Government of India, there could be none in respect of structures which, from time and popular renown, have virtually become public monuments—national institutions as it were. Such are the temples of Panam, Baradi, Nabinagar and Sultanpore. There are no more important landmarks in the country worthy of inclusion in the cartography of this part than the steeple of Baradi and that of Nabinagar. You will look for either of them in the Surveyor-General's chart in vain.

THE DHALESWARI FAIR.

December 17.

This Fair is rather a venerable institution. In a country in transition, it is more than a hundred years old. It is the most important gathering of the kind in East Bengal. The Fair at the bathing site on the Brahmapootra at Nangulband is a child's play to it. It has, however, long since passed its meridian, its grand climacteric, and is now on the sere and yellow leaf. Of late years, owing to the opening of new marts and the improvement of old ones, above all, to the augmentation and improvement of means of communication as well as to the growing habit of locomotion, it is going down in public interest and, of course, in its splendour. The same

causes will prove disastrous to all the older gatherings of this description. Formerly, this Fair supplied the wants not only of the immediate locality, or the neighbouring Parganas of Sonargong-Moheshurdi, or the adjacent Districts of Tipperah and Noakhali and Backergunje, but of more distant Mymensing and far off Sylhet and Assam. In those days, moreover, people provided for their wants of a whole year. Now-a-days, they are under no such necessity; buying when they want—without undertaking the many responsibilities, as without incurring any of the risks, of storing. They can resort to nearer marts which have since risen in the interior, or even, if necessary, proceed to more distant ones in less time than they formerly could come in to this. The lion's share of the merchandise at this Fair is taken up by tradesmen, wholesale and retail, of the whole of East and part of North Bengal. They were obliged to find and to lock up capital for their entire invest-

ment for the year. They are now wiser, as they can afford to be. They can buy here, there, everywhere, according to need, or the local consumption of their stores. The Sylhet shopkeeper who was wont to make his purchases for the year here, can now buy wholesale in Sylhet itself perhaps; if not, can procure many things from neighbouring Assam when required; at the worst, may order up goods from Calcutta or even proceed at a cheap rate there by steam and choose for himself. If a man of any character, he may even get credit more easily or on better terms at a permanent port and emporium than at an annual commercial mart. This year the Fair is in one notable respect poorer than ever. The exhibitors are gradually falling off from the growing difficulty experienced in the profitable disposal of their wares. This year the Oswals have absented *en masse*, and the Oswal element is a great factor in this traffic.

The ground belongs to two Shaoo fami-

lies—headed respectively by a boy named Ramnath and my friend "Digu Babu," as he is familiarly called. The rent charged by them is not light—twelve annas for one square *nal* of ground—a few yards—the sheds being made by the exhibitors themselves. It is worth trying, perhaps, if by reducing the rate they could not keep up the institution for some time to come The causes of decadence are, I fear, too deep-seated

I suppose the Dhaleswari and the Lakhya are, like the Megna, modern streams. In the last century they could scarcely have been of much importance. The Booree Ganga is more than two centuries old. Possibly, it was the Old Ganges before the river took its present course to the South. The name seems to point to this fact. The Dhaleswari was then a branch of the greater river, issuing from it and falling into it. So the Lakhya, deriving its water from the Brahmapootra, recouped it, unless it paid tribute to the Ganges

—the Old Ganges, now Boorce Ganga. The Brahmapootra appears to have descended from Mymensing through Sonargong and Moonsheegunje and Bikrampur, and joined the Ganges at its mouth to the north of Faridpur, or rather Backergunje District, the combined waters forming the short but very broad Megna and falling into the sea. I say rather Backergunje, because the mouth of the present Pudda is higher up to the north than the old course which formerly formed the southern boundary of the present Faridpur District. The old bed of the Ganges may be still distinctly traced in that quarter. It is named in the Surveyor-General's map as the old Pudda and Pudda Nuddee. The Kirtinassa—now the Ganges or Pudda—is a modern stream so called for destroying the monuments—Kirti—of the famed magnates of these parts, CHAND ROY and KEDAR ROY. The Brahmapootra being diverted towards Ulukandi formed the present long river Megna, while the Brahmapootra joining

the Pudda by way of the Jumuna has since weakened the river in the direction of Ulukandi.

Intending to visit Rampal, I sent for a conveyance. In the map there is a direct road from this beach right through Bullal Bari, Rampal and Bajrajogini to the south. There are no wheeled vehicles for the simple reason that there are no roads. No box or chair borne on men's shoulders is to be had for either love or money. There is one apology of a palki for sale at the Fair, but it has no bottom, to say nothing of other imperfections. KUMUD NATH and LAKIR returned disappointed and dejected For my part, I was not prepared to abandon the hope of accomplishing my long cherished wish, how I did not know. There must be some Somebodies here or about here who had a palki, said I. Tewari, the Inspector of Police in attendance at the Fair, one of Sir ASHLEY EDEN'S lucky dogs, who was at Baraset when EDEN was King there—being applied to, offered the valuable suggestion that

the Zemindar's office might help us to get bearers. But what was the good of importing coals to Newcastle? I had bearers enough and to spare—a whole boatful of the Lord Jagannath's elect, in all the glory of ecclesiastical paint. However, my people set out again and returned with the gospel of success. KUMUD NATH had called on the Dewan of the Shaoo Zemindar, BEPIN Baboo, son of the late RAMNARAYAN SHAW. He is a nice young man of substance apparently, the Dewan—for the master is a minor—who, on hearing of me as the Maharaja's minister, immediately took the greatest interest in the matter. He offered to come and visit me at once but was prevented by the arrival of a lot of guests. He said he would come in the afternoon, and ordered a quantity of provisions for me—an order which KUMUD NATH prevailed upon him to withdraw. After enquiry, he sent one of his orderlies, a Pahalwan who had formerly been to Agartala, over to me to say that a palki might be had

from the house of his minor principal. Immediately I sent my bearers to bring it and keep it ready for me

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"Could we but know
The land that ends our dark, uncertain travel,
Where lie those happier hills and meadows low,—
Ah, if beyond the spirit's inmost cavil,
Aught of that country could we surely know,
Who would not go?

"Might we but hear
The hovering angels' high imagined chorus,
Or catch, betimes, with wakeful eyes and clear,
One radiant vista of the realm before us,—
With one rapt moment given to see and hear,
Ah, who would fear?"

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RUINS OF RAMPAL,

THE HINDU CAPITAL OF BENGAL.

I wanted a guide, only. My palki-men are strangers to these parts, indeed distant Orissans. This difficulty was easily overcome by the Pahalwan volunteering to accompany me. I told him to come after a couple of hours. I went through my personal duties and, after dinner, left.

KUMUD NATH, after vain efforts to secure so much even as a beggar's horse, had given up the trip, but I would not hear of it. I prophesied the shame and mortification that must be his portion, if he threw away such an opportunity of visiting the famed Hindu antiquity of Bengal; and, after all, the way was short. He had been scared away by people speaking of

the distance and the difficulties of the way. I pointed out to him, by the Surveyor-General's 4 inches to the mile map, how baseless was the idea of distance, at any rate. Bullal Bari was not quite two miles off! and Rampal proper not quite a mile from there! The difficulties must be an equally contemptible scarecrow which could frighten away only Calcutta Baboos from such a poor but promising enterprise. In fine, the picture of the arduousness and even hazardousness of the journey, as I shrewdly guessed, was a devise of these people, at which our own assisted, at once to escape the search, in right earnest, for conveyance, and preserve the reputation of the place, and finally to leave me a drop of consolation under disappointment. He then consented to brave it on foot.

We left our aquatic camp at 3 P.M. It was with no ordinary sense of relief that I stept on land, after so many days of durance vile on board. Leaving the sand-bank behind and a

shed temple or abbey to the left, we got upon *terra firma*, and wended our way through a Bengali village. Indeed, we cut right through a lot of bamboo-made country bullock-carts scattered in the courts about its neat little well-mopped shed homes—which, for the first time, gave me an idea of the kind of houses in which our Agartala Amla live in Bikrampore and elsewhere, —at the back of which lay some goldsmiths' forge. I came upon the house of BEPIN Baboo It is a rather imposing residence of the old style, showing that the family of the late RAMNARAYAN was opulent from a long period, that is, before the rise of the British. Sweeping past the house, I rode through the fringe of a pond where I was overwhelmed by a horrible stench Surely, that was the identical Bykunt of JAFER KHAN—the purgatory of fiscal tyranny through which the defaulting landholders were wont to be drawn in that wretch's Nawabate. It would seem as if all the filth and excreta of ages were gathered there. How people manage

to exist and even to flourish in the vicinity! It required the compensation of the perfume of several mustard fields in flower to efface the unpleasantness. The beauty of a Mussulmani of the agricultural class also disposed me to good humour.

BEPIN had had another house built for him in the modern style, on larger and more expensive proportions, certainly not grander, a little less than half a mile off. But he could not remove there owing to a warning. He was prevented by a dream in which he was informed that the river would move away.

The villages on our route are peopled by lower class Hindus and Mahomedans. No hideous pot-bellied dirty urchins, encircled by a string round the waist for clothing, or bandaged with stinking amulets and charms, such as Bengali hamlets in some parts abound in, met us on the way. The children we saw are far from ugly. Many possess clear complexions and fine features. Whether I was fortunate

in having gathered for my inspection the best specimens, or not, I certainly found good grounds for concluding this secluded region a land of beauty. The Mahomedans specially have the advantage in this respect. I espied among some poor families living in mean thatched huts beside shady trees on the banks of a village pond, some particularly handsome fair women and children. How they come by their clear complexion and regular features, is a wonder. The problem is one in the ethnology of Bengal. The late JOHN LANG, lawyer and *litterateur*, the founder-editor of the *Mofussilite*, English newspaper at Meerut, in his Indian Travels—a book which deserves to be better known—oracularly avers that colour is no criterion of gentility in India. That is too sweeping a generalization, which Mr. LANG tries to support by the most unlucky illustrations. It is by no means an absurd remark, however. Its author must have continually lighted upon proofs in its favour. Yet it is far

from absolutely true—showing how difficult it is for foreigners to form correct views of matters Indian. Complexion is not an accident. It is only among the higher classes, whether Hindu or Mussulman—the representatives of Aryan emigration in the one case, and the representatives of Aryan and Semitic in the other—that we have ordinarily a right to expect much personal beauty. Some tribes seem to present a puzzle. The Sonar Banias, who form such an important part of the Hindu community of Calcutta and Hoogly and the neighbouring places, are, specially in their women, a good-looking people. From some observations and enquiries I made many years ago, I found that the Joogies, if they did not as a rule suffer from poverty as the Sonar Banias are rich, might put forward the same claim. The Shaoos of Dacca might be equally distinguished, but I have no knowledge. They are a respectable class who have nothing in common, except perhaps remote origin, with the Soorees

of the Calcutta district. But even these publicans have no low caste aspect and indeed shame many of the ill-favoured classes that assert superiority over them. The Kapali is another of the "suppressed" castes that have in Calcutta risen to wealth. The Kapalis in town scarcely retain the tradition of their original calling in the country. The wealthy live in style; as they drive past you in their elegant broughams or lordly barouches, they are indistinguishable from the rich of other classes. But even their poorest castemen in the far-interior are not ugly. A protracted trial at the Agartala sessions at which I presided, in which a whole Kapali hamlet was implicated in the murder of a girl, gave me an unequalled opportunity for seeing the Kapalis of that part of the country. They impressed me favorably. The principal defendant was a beauty, with a fine fair complexion, and it was with a heavy heart that I convicted and passed sentence on her. Luckily, the circumstances proved did not

amount to absolute murder, so that I was spared the capital responsibility. All these several classes, I have no doubt, are of Aryan descent. The Joogees claim a high Jogi—twice-born ascetic—origin. The Kapalis might do the same; their designation is in their favour.

These Moonsheegunje Mussulmans, still retaining such a proportion of good looks and fine complexion, seem to be descended either from superior Hindu converts or superior foreign Mussulmans. In the former case, however, they could scarcely have so degenerated in *status* and occupation. The mere tradition of caste would have preserved them in their high estate, at least from grovelling in the lowest mire. I conclude them to be of *villayeti*—extra-Indian—descent. The Mussulmans, without the discipline of that passive but powerful aristocratic feeling which is not absent in any class of Hindu society, are, when power or external means and education fail, apt to decay. Thus I found at Agartala that the learned

Hakeem who went from the West and lived as a grandee at the Court of the late Maharaja KRISHNA KIŞOR MANIKYA—the present Maharaja's father—having married beneath him there, is now represented by a son who has no pretensions to his father's social grade. He is a fine strapping youth, with a manly heart I dare say, as with a manly presence, but the poor fellow cannot write or read, nor will he plough. He draws a pension from the Rajbari, and, for the rest, contents himself with the exploits of a village Nimrod. His son will, of necessity, be a cultivator direct. Such a deterioration is next to impossible among the Hindus, showing the continual need of careful selection for marriage and of the influences of education and property for our Mahomedan brethren. In Tipperah, there are many other instances of fallen families—of Mirzas and Begs employed in husbandry or as policemen and messengers. Here, in Moonsheegunje, these rural Mussulmans had probably Mogul or

Pathan ancestors. We are in the neighbourhood of the old Mogul capital of Bengal. But this part of the country was the refuge of the Pathans before the conquering Moguls—one reason of the preponderance of the Mahomedan element in the population of these countries.

The very cattle, though ill-fed and worked to death, are a better breed than the ordinary Bengali cow.

In three quarters of an hour after leaving the fleet, we come upon a trench. It is the trench of the great Hindu— whether Vaidya or Kayastha is now disputed between the rival castes— King BULLAL SEN. Here commences the work which goes a great way off. Or rather, here is one end of a work of considerable extent. For, it is the moat of the monarch's palace. Except for its associations, the ditch has nothing to recommend it or to arrest the eye. Had it not been specially and specifically pointed out to me, I would scarcely have noticed it. It is not remarkable for depth.

Altogether, it has too much the air of a modest modern concern, for reverence. For all that, it may be the remains of the very moat of Bullal Bari which, having filled up by accumulation of silt, was since cleared and redug out, for purposes of possessory demarcation. It stretches out on both sides around the place, looking like the separating ditches in the villages of metropolitan Bengal. At places, however, it has a more business-like, if not formidable, appearance. We cross it by an old wooden bridge—a British work. The peculiarity of the prospect in this part of the place, is the cultivation of the plaintain. This is the principal produce of this orchard of Dacca and Naraingunje. Groves of this plant are on all sides of our way, each numbering from a thousand to three thousand thriving trees. The rival of the plantain is the sugar-cane—the slender red species. The bamboo grows thick and luxuriant in innumerable clusters scarcely needing plantation. The rattan-

cane is absolutely wild and abundant. The plantain, the better cultivated kinds like the *Champa*, is a fine substantial yet delicious fruit. But here only the *Kantali* or *Safri* is raised. From the vast numbers of the trees, I imagined that they were planted for their fibres for manufacturing purposes, but I saw no apparatus for extracting the fibre or signs of industry of that kind, and was told that they were cultivated for the fruit only. What a pity that our people in the East should still be eating plantains—of the *Kantali* kind and almost the *Kantali* kind only! It is a wretched fruit, of the same status as the *Anona*, and fit, like it, for the table of Santals only. In and around Calcutta, we have long since outgrown the barbarism of that dessert, thanks to our European connection from a long time! Here, among us, only widows and punctilious elders are condemned to the *Kantali*, for they will not touch any others. It is thoroughly orthodox, for it is our only ancient fruit of the kind, the only one mentioned in our

Scriptures and our classical literature—in fact, the only one that has a Sanskrit name. Our gods and kings are really to be pitied for having known no better—our Rishis, in especial, who lived principally on fruits, and had only this poor *Kantali* for a perennial staple. The up-country Kishis had to go without the fruit altogether, as even the ill-favoured but sweet and nutritious *Kantali* throve not, as it grows not to this day, in Upper-India. It is only since our country has been thrown open to foreign, above all, European enterprise, that our orchards and flower-gardens and kitchen-gardens have been vastly improved, that we have made the acquaintance of new and desirable eatables and drinkables and acquired a taste for new comforts and luxuries, as well as the means for satisfying them. Undue pretensions must be curbed: It is necessary to keep the best men and races straight, and I have never been slow to prick when required—the objects of the attention enjoying the thing

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and it having, by the way, a wholesome effect on the neighbours and bystanders of all camps. But the insane jealousy of the White-man I can never sympathise with. It is neither patriotic nor candid. It is simply ignorant and puerile. A moment's inward glance at the source of our most energysing ideas—the slightest inquiry into the derivation of our physical enjoyments—of what we eat or drink or wear or sleep upon or write with—what houses we live in—what furniture we use—ought to be sufficient to disabuse every honest Indian of the unfortunate prejudice. The stranger has given a substantial return. He has at any rate given you the golden *Champa* plantain—no Dead Sea apple, but with rich pulp within. It is your fault if you neglect it. Thus, in East Bengal, where his influence has been less felt, our brethren are without it. Here then is distinct room for improvement. The man that introduces in his district the exotic fruits and vegetables with which foreigners have en-

riched our land, will benefit at once himself and his country.

Thus we wend our way through Bullal Bari—once the moated palace of a long line of kings, now a vast intrenched area of rural cultivation and habitation. To the observant eye, it has the look of a low tableland, slightly raised above the deep rice fields at its back. Hence the cultivation is of the upland character —there are orchards and gardens of substantial trees, shady or lofty, interspersed with huts, few and far between, or a hamlet or two. And now we suddenly come upon the rice plant! For that matter, we have whole fields of it! How so? But see the end of them before our eyes! The ground on their other side is high and dry again, bearing villages protected by giant trees as by picked body-guards. These rice-fields are not continuous low plots, but slope from the sides down to the centre, still, in the height of December, filled with water, more or less. This had evidently been a vast

lake—the reservoir of the Sen Kings. In fact, we are right on the very borders of the famous "Bullal Dighee"!

And the venerable and lofty Gajari tree, the most precious relic of the place as of ancient Hindudom in Bengal, rich in the homage of many centuries, stands before us in all its hoary majesty! One can hardly believe one's senses. Miraculous in origin, marvellous in growth, romance has continually gathered round the tree, until it had faded in the mind to a veritable myth. But here it is, in all its grandeur and glory, without possibility of mistake! Can it be the same on which the power of the fiery Aryan colonists—the Five Rishis from whom the Brahmans of Bengal are descended—was displayed? It has certainly all the appearance of great age. It is still in fine health, but its growth has been exhausted. It is about 80 cubits in height, but it had evidently been loftier. The Gajari is not quite the Sal *(Shorea robusta)* but another species with

shorter leaves. Apart from its history, this specimen is a notable plant. It is the only tree of its kind, for the Gajari grows not in the Delta. It forks out from near the root into two heads. It bears marks of worship, being painted at the roots and lower end with vermillion. It is the resort of barren women, who hanker for an interesting situation. Since the dead post for teddering the royal elephant revived under holy touch, countless fair eyes have washed the feet of the good Gajari. And now it is not only a monument of antiquity and faith but the most prominent landmark in the country within many, many miles.

The whole tract between the Dhaleswari and the Ganges—locally Kirtinasa—is classic ground—one of the earliest seats of Bengali civilization—one of the most advanced posts of the Aryan migration from the North West. In spite of the vicissitudes of civil history combining with a tropical climate acting on an alluvial soil, there are abundant traces of

ancient population, wealth and power The ground itself is high, a flat mound, presenting to the eye of the plainsman the appearance of a low hill—in reality evidencing a pulverised if not buried city.

There are remains of great public works. The present rural jungle-encompassed footpath was once a broad causeway extending from river to river, from the Dhaleswari, right through the western embankment of the great Bullal Lake, to Rajbari. And there are other roads, though less important, to be traced—all attributed to BULLAL SEN. Artificial lakes too abound. There are still some interesting villages in the neighbourhood. Bujjrojogini, with its cluster of twenty-seven odd villages, is one of the most important Hindu settlements, teeming with high caste and low caste life. Panchsar, now a rural village, was once the royal residence of the great ADISOOR.

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PUBLICATIONS BY THE SAME WRITER.

CAUSES OF THE MUTINY. By A Hindu of Bengal. Edited by Malcolm Lewin, Esq., late a Judge of the Madras Sudder Court and Provisional Member of Council. London, Stanford, 1857.

MR. WILSON, LORD CANNING, AND THE INCOME TAX. By Somboo C. Mookerjee. Calcutta, 1859.

THE CAREER OF AN INDIAN PRINCESS, Her Highness the late Secundra Begum of Bhopal, K.C.S.I. By Sambhu Chandra Mukhopadhyaya. Calcutta, 1869.

"Mr. Mill asserts in his *Subjection of Women* that in India women have, on the whole, proved themselves greater administrators than men, and it is undoubtedly true that in our time the most distinguished and most successful native rulers have belonged to the sex which Mr. Mill describes as subjugated. The mother of Dhuleep Singh . . . . .
The Begum of Oudh . . . . . The Ranee of Jhansie . . . . . None among these, however, had so strong a character as the Mussulman lady who died last October, and who for twenty-one years governed Bhopal with the wit and the success of a great

statesman, or displayed her capacity for sensible, straightforward rule. Her State was not very large, not very much bigger than the Eastern Counties, and her revenue did not exceed that of the Duke of Devonshire, but still she was one of the true governing class of earth, and the facts of her career may interest our readers as well as any parochial matter. They have been recalled to our recollection by a short biography just received, in which a Kulin Brahmin of Bengal contrives in his admiration of her to insinuate some strongly depreciatory but not very unjust remarks upon our rule . . . . . The author . . is a shrewd, hard-hitting critic, with no slight political ability. This, for instance, is a nearly perfect answer to Mr. Mill, much better because simpler than our own, which was that . . . . Sambhu Chandra Mookerjee says . . . . . He seems, too, thoroughly aware of the specialty of his heroine, her consciousness of masculine ability, for he quotes two or three times her . . . . . her native apologist explains by a suggestion which strikes us as singularly shrewd. She had always, he says . . . . No one, we believe, either European or native, ever came in contact with her without a conviction that, had her sphere been but a little larger, she might have founded a dynasty or built up an empire. Her history is quoted by her native biographer as a proof that "that utter disqualifier in Asia" her sex, can be overcome by rare personal qualities . . . .—*From a Leading Article in* "The Spectator," *London.*

This short—too short—little memoir . . . . We have said "too, short," because the very eventful life of her whom the writer styles "the best by far of all the native sovereigns of India of our time, the ablest, wisest,

most enlightened and most fortunate," affords. . . . . because also, to judge from this little specimen—the author, with sufficient data before him, is capable of producing a very good biography.

In conclusion this excellent little biography is of especial interest to persons who study the relations of the British Government with the Independent Powers. —*From a Review in* "The Asiatic," *London.*

THE PRINCE IN INDIA AND TO INDIA. By An Indian. Calcutta, Berigny & Co., 1872.

The Prince in India and to India, by an Indian, is not an unpleasant book to read. With many satirical hits at the unfortunate Englishman who never fails to be the butt for the shafts of every Bengali archer, to whom he has unwarily imparted his own vernacular, and though somewhat marred by the incurable diffuseness of the Bengali, it shows throughout a truly wonderful command of the English language. The writer is justifiably severe on the miserable *fiascos*, which, as he truly says, we invariably make when we attempt anything in the way of a pageant, and he waxes eloquent..... But the main current of thought which runs through the book, is that of complaint that the Englishman does not associate more cordially with his Eastern fellow-subject, and more particularly with the Bengali. There are the two well-known pictures drawn in vivid contrast of light and shade, like one of Lord Macaulay's historical portraits—the native on the one side, a being of the tenderest sensibilities and most gushing emotions; on the other..... .—*The Indian Observer.*

THE PRINCE IN INDIA, AND TO INDIA.—By Sambhu Chandra Mukhopadhyaya. (Trubner)—We should say

that this was an interesting revelation of thoughts and feelings that prevailed among the natives of India, if we felt sure that an Oriental ever does reveal his thoughts and feelings. Some expressions, however, are, we may feel tolerably certain, genuine enough. Our author says :—

"I do not expect, as the immediate effect of the late visit of the Prince, any sudden or sweeping reforms in administration: these may come in due course; all I anticipate—and this I have a right to expect—is a visible improvement in the tone of the Government, and of English, and ultimately Anglo-Indian, society towards the hundreds of millions of Asiatics subject to England. We believe in the reality of *tone*, in the existence of an atmosphere either suffocating or refreshing. Tone may exasperate, atmosphere may conciliate. Always important, in our case tone is all-important, for after all that is urged regarding the ill-success or unpopularity of British rule in India, the worst, the chief, almost the sole blister is caused by—a tone."

Another fault of ours, about the reality of which we may be pretty certain, is that we are not *magnificent* enough. There ought, thinks our author, to have been other great ceremonials to welcome the Prince and give him an imperial prestige than the one which accompanied his investiture with the Order of the Star of India. "I think," he adds significantly, "Indian money would have been better spent in such a valuable *Tamasha* than in *fêting* the Sultan in London." Generally the author's exposition of native feelings is profoundly interesting and expressed with great force. We may add that he shows as keen an understanding of our own politics, when his subject happens to bring him into contact with them, as could any writer of our own.—*The Spectator, (London.)*

Messrs. Berigny & Co., Calcutta, have published a little after date, but none the worse on that account,

a sketch from the pen of Sambhu Chandra Mukhopadhyaya, of the Prince of Edinburgh's doing in Calcutta and of all that was done in giving him welcome. . . . . There is something though, and something important too, in what our author says about the sheer inaptitude of Englishmen for producing a real pageant. He literally pours waggon-loads of sarcasm upon us for our reception of Prince Alfred. . . . . .

A more uncompromising piece of criticism was never offered to the public ; and now having heard the whole of our satirist's bitter satire, let us give him a little bit of advice in return. We acknowledge our inaptitude, our clumsiness, our sheer incapacity for pageantry. We never were able to make a good show in our own land or any other.....But when our author tells us that the power to produce a pageant is one of the chief things required in India, we tell him that, with all respect for pageants, and all proper admission of their value, we dispute his views. We think that if the English race in India can comprehend what is involved in raising the condition of the lowest classes of the people, in developing the resources of the country, in educating the people to understand rightly their own history and the history of mankind, the story of English rule in India will be a nobler one than even that of the race of Baber to which our author appeals.

. . . . . .

We accept the lesson of our critic : we hope that he in return will accept ours, which is worth quite as much as his to India.—*The Friend of India.*

Lord Salisbury has found an unexpected supporter of his argument that this country is not fitted for representative institutions in Baboo Sambhu Chandra Mu-

khopadhyaya, who has just published a Memorial of the Visit of the Duke of Edinburgh to India. . . . . —The "Englishman."

But we have space for no more. The above, we hope, will give a fair idea of *the work*, *one which is*, *seriously speaking*, *worth reading*, inasmuch as it is by far the most native of the native productions we have lately seen.—From a leading article in The "Pioneer."

The *Indian Observer* lately had what it scarcely ever has—an article written in singularly bad taste..... But we totally refuse to consider the Prince's tour in this aspect, and *we commend to "Indian Observer's" attention a book recently put forth by an Indian author*, ("The Prince in India and to India") *which we briefly noticed in our local columns at the time, but which will well repay perusal by Englishmen who wish to know how such subjects strike the native mind.* . . . . . The writer's language may be occasionally a little too oriental and exuberant, but we have seldom seen several of the great Anglo-Indian questions of the day treated with a truer conception of the real facts. The charge of want of loyalty and gratitude, so commonly brought against the Bengali, seems to rankle in our author's mind. . . . . .

The Bengalis have lately received, and deserved, a severe castigation from the Indian Press for their foolish self-praise, yet this is no reason why we should refuse to look on our own faults as reflected in a Bengali mirror. * * * —From a leading article in "The Englishman."

THE EMPIRE IS PEACE: THE BARODA *COUP D'ETAT*. Being the Baroda Number of *Mookerjee's Magazine*, (New Series, edited by Sambhu

Chandra Mookerjee), Calcutta, Berigny & Co., 1875.

If we have always admired Mookerjee and his *Magazine*, we did not expect such a fine thing as his present Baroda number, even from him. Whether in point of interest, research, logic, wit, and grace of style, it can rank with the best of European productions. It is fearless in its tone, profound in its researches, precise in its arguments, happy in its expressions and exhaustive in its range. We are grateful to him for this brilliant production, and we can only express our gratitude by recommending every body to purchase a copy.—*Amrita Bazar Patrica.*

. There is ability as well as force and bitterness in the bill of indictment drawn up against England, and it will doubtless serve its purpose of lashing into fury the enmity of many of our native fellow-subjects. We really admire the candour and boldness of the writer; his language may be here and there exaggerated, but he has certainly hit not a few blots, and if he has done harm by exciting the passions of our foes, he has also done us good—just as a bitter tonic is more afficacious than a mere soothing syrup. From a leading article in the *Statesman*, (Calcutta and Bombay.)

We don't think we ever read such unmitigated outspoken criticism, verging on treason if not overstepping the boundary, as Mookerjee's Baroda number. But the style is good and the language admirable, every word flowing easy and yet each brief sentence is acutely incisive. As to reason or logic, they are most cleverly parodied. The writer seems to have studied Comte to some purpose and such a torrent of sophism never before carried all sober fact before it clear out of sight.—*The Athenæum and Daily News*, (Madras.)

When Baboo Sambhu Chandra Mookerjee was a young man, fresh from the Hindu Metropolitan College, the late Baboo Haris Chandra Mookerjee singled him out as a youth of great promise. Our lamented predecessor had a high opinion of Baboo Sambhu Chandra, and that distinguished journalist, Mr. Meredith Townsend, has more than once spoken of him as a man of "high political ability." The Baroda number of his *Magazine* does not belie the promises of his youth. Nothing more interesting than the Baroda number has of late emanated from the pen of a Bengalee. Baboo Sambhu Chandra Mookerjee has a personal knowledge of the courts of several Native Princes, and it would be no exaggeration to say that he knows more about their relations to our Government, than any other Bengalee that we know of. . . .—*The Bengalee.*

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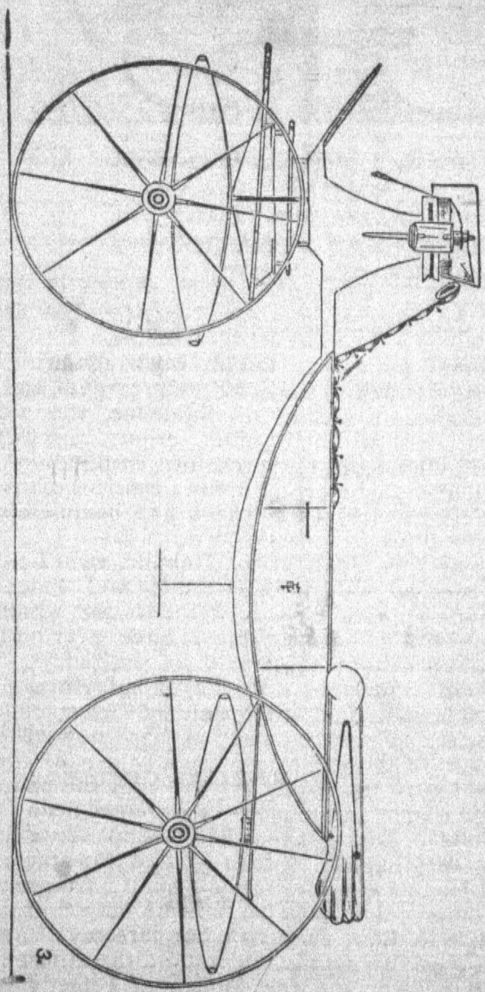

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study. He is well known through the newspaper, *Reis & Rayyet*, of which he is the Editor, and which he always turns out a readable and instructive paper; nor can we suppose that his forthcoming volume will be otherwise.---*The Indian Daily News*, Sept. 8, 1887.

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We have received from the office of *Reis and Rayyet*, one of the leading native newspapers of Calcutta, a most readable little *brochure* written by Baboo Sambhu C. Mookerjee, once Minister to the late Nawab Faridoon Jah, Bahadoor, Nawab Nazim of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, which gives a graphic account of the Baboo's travels to and in Independent Tipperah. Written in capital English and evidently by a gentleman of broad views and enlightened mind, the work is decidedly a valuable addition to the catalogue of English written Bengalee literature.

This book of travels should be read widely not only by English residents out here, but by our countrymen at home, for it teems with interest and teaches us far more about the fine belt of unopened country travelled through than any work of the sort written by an Englishman would have done. Baboo Sambhu Chunder Mookerjee is one of whom his countrymen may well be proud, for he writes throughout with the moderate and educated pen of a thorough gentleman.---*The Indian Planters' Gazette & Sporting News.* October 4, 1887.

Mr. S. Mookerjee, who will be readily recognised as the editor of that able little paper the *Reis and Rayyet*, dedicates his travles in Bengal to a wide circle of readers---those who know India and are unable to love her; those who love her, and do not know her; those who neither know nor love; those who being tired of India, take to travelling; foreigners who want to know, and Englishmen. The author himself is not the least tired of India, though he is a traveller by profession, we might almost say, and though he puts limits upon journeys, never caring to get very far away from Calcutta. It is not mileage, however,

which makes the traveller. It is the power to observe sympathetically what is going on at each stage of a journey, and to keep his spirit about the minor inconveniences which necessarily occur by road, river, or rail. This Mr. Mookerjee does. He never loses his good humour under any set of circumstances, and what is better, he conveys a full sense of it to his pages. The reader may take a choice of journeys through Eastern Bengal to Tipperah, or to the heart of Bengal Proper, and will in each case be fully rewarded by the fruits of Mr. Mookerjee's wanderings. Perhaps the English reader will be mainly struck by the excellent English style of the writer. The author is not ashamed of his nationality ; he rejoices in being a Bengali, but at the same time he indulges in prose which has no alien trace in it. It is not the English of an educated German or Frenchman ; it is the nervous Saxon of a subject of the Empress of India. Mr. Mookerjee had special advantages in some of his journeys, especially to Independent Tipperah, whither he was called to an important official position. He was thus assured of many attentions, though, in forming accurate impressions of a country it is doubtful whether it is not better to be untrammelled with

connections which frighten away the simple folk and impose reticence on them as a duty. From the notes of his journey through East Bengal, and to show how genial is his outlook, we take the following :---[Extract.]

From Dacca he went further East, and his experiences on the Megna are of a most enlivening description. He saw many visions of beauty, and Mr. Mookerjee is no niggard when he is describing something he has enjoyed seeing. Here is a sketch on his way up the river :---[Extract.]

But it is not physical beauty alone which detains our author's eye :---[Extract].

The same symptoms of material progress he notes among the boatmen on his course.---[Extract.]

Some portion of the volume has already been contributed to the *Statesman*, and will be familiar to our readers. The following description of natural effects is not known to them. We doubt whether Mr. Ruskin, or Mr. Black would accept it as a final account of the sun's rising and setting :---[Extract].---*The Statesman*, October 7, 1887.

The talented editor of *Reis and Rayyet* does not stand in need of a certificate from us for his excellent

English. His command over that language has been the cause of wonder to many Europeans. Why, in the book before us, Dr. Mookerjee *naively* confesses this: "He (Father Justin Clerici, O. C. B., the Roman Catholic priest of Noakhali) does not speak English fluently or idiomatically and expressed great surprise at my proficiency. I must have been in England, he thought." Many other European gentlemen had complimented Dr. S. C. Mookerjee on his linguistic attainments. But he is a modest man. He says that there are many more like him, as "good fish in the sea as out of it." We must add our word of praise though ours does not count for much. Natives of India who hold that the English language cannot be mastered by foreigners, will find here a refutation. But apart from its linguistic merits, the book has a value of its own. It has been a standing reproach against the natives that they do little towards laying open before the eyes of foreigners or for that matter natives also, the beauties of their country. Dr. Mookerjee has shown that there are natives who can successfully perform the task. His descriptions of natural scenery and phenomena, his portraits of the people, his dissertations on history and sociology are

all evidences of a strong intellect, of keen perception and the faculty of marshalling thoughts. We commend the book "Mookerjee's Travels in Bengal" to our readers.---*The Mahratta.* October 9, 1887.

Mr. Mookerjee has been before the public for years as editor of a native paper, and as author of several books on Indian subjects. Both his way of looking at things and his way of remarking on them are original. The novel and interesting book before us is exactly what its title indicates, or, as Mr. Mookerjee says in his preface, "a book of travels at home---the journeyings of a Calcutta Bengali in Bengal Proper." "Called to office in Tipperah," he writes, "I, for the first time, in 1878, saw East Bengal. I have since been several times all through the country to that State and back, keeping notes of what struck me. Out of eight journeys in all, counting returns, here are accounts of only four---two trips to Tipperah and two trips back." The following extract from the introduction is in the author's best style, and gives in a few sentences a complete sketch of the history of Tipperah from the earliest times to the present day :---[Extract.]

The successive chapters consist of jottings made

either on boats and steamers as the author pursued his journeys by water, or as he travelled across country and took up his residence in Tipperah. While the account is all readable, there can be no doubt Mr. Mookerjee is right in calling those portions the most important which are headed "Glimpses of Life in a Hindu State," "Curious Customs," "Notes on Geography and Cartography," "The Dhaleswari Fair," and "The Ruins of Rampal, the Hindu capital." Things are described which a European would be likely to pass over, and other things are passed over which a European would notice. Much strange information is given about the social life of the people and their relations to the authorities. Old traditions are related, and a few antiquities described. Having come upon a Roman Catholic village in Tipperah, the traveller writes at considerable length, in a chatty style about "the history of Portuguese settlement in Bengal, and the introduction of artillery to the East." But nothing in the book equals the account of the ancient civilization of Hindus in those remote parts. "The whole tract between the Dhaleswari and the Ganges is classic ground."—*The Englishman*, October 19, 1887.

An interesting volume which throws a luminous light on the history of the country between Calcutta and Independent Tipperah, and recounts with entertaining freshness many incidents relating to the life, customs and manners of the people, great and small. The book is issued from the office of *Reis and Rayyet* in an attractive form, which its readable contents well deserve.—*The People's Budget and Railway Service Gazette*, (now *The Morning Post*,) October 22, 1887.

The general reader will rise from a perusal of Mr. S. C. Mookerjee's book of travels and voyages with more than expected satisfaction. The *naiveté* and charm of his pages, written with a cultivated literary taste, and in exceptionally good English, carrries the reader, without letting him feel the tedium of *ennui*, through mazes of a polished and entertaining conversation, interspersed with sketches of humorous anecdote and with the results of an experience of men and manners, and a knowledge of times past and present—a rare combinaton that will raise him in the estimation of those who know him as well as of those who read him, whether it be in a spirit of fair criticism, or from desire to learn something of the man who dedicates "this little booklet" to several

and sundry, as also to Englishmen, "on whose sympathetic knowledge depends the good of the Indian myriads."

There are so many passages of merit—though the topics are often but lightly treated—so many scenes depicted of Indian interest, and references to the India of history, so many well-drawn episodes of social and everyday life, so many obscure phenomena described and coruscations of thought exhibited, so many vivid pictures and narratives combining the realism of art with the idealism of poetry, that we find it not an easy matter to furnish a specimen of Mr. Mookerjee's skill and ingenuity as a writer, a traveller, or a thinker. As an instance, however, typical of his descriptive powers, we will let him describe the "British Private" as he saw him seated under the "Mammoth Pavilion" of the railway terminus at Sealdah :—

.....

We would invite the reader's personal attention to this book, for such descriptions of the Megna and Megna Sea and its tributaries, the fish famine, the last days at Agartala, or the Ripon ovation at Calcutta. With this bare indication of a few leading subjects we leave it to the reader to make his choice of the read-

able sketches of these travels. Our review would scarcely be serviceable if it did not record the fact that Mr. Mookerjee's unpretending efforts in the contribution he has made to English literature win for him that fame to which he is fully entitled as a man of letters, competent to enlighten his countrymen, as well as those who may consult him, either as a friend or as one who has something of interest to tell them. —*The Indian Spectator*, October 23, 1887.

In that delightful book of his, Mookerjee's "Travels in Bengal."—*The Mahratta*. October 30, 1887.

The spell is at last broken; and Dr. Sambhu Chunder Mookerjee has given us a faithful picture of that littleknown region which separates the metropolitan districts from our North Eastern Frontier, and of the Native State known as Hill, or Independent Tipperah, which serves as a buffer between our territories and the congeries of wild tribes known as Lushais. Dr. Mookerjee is the *Doyen* of the native press; and his first essay in the literary craft dates as far back as the Indian Mutiny. Nor is he wanting in practical acquaintance with his theme; for he paid four visits to Tipperah between 1877 and 1874, and was for

nearly two [six] years Chief Adviser to the Maharaja.....

.....

Our author, Indian of the Indians as he is, acknowledges the undying obligation under which the parent State has laid his country : "It is necessary," he writes, "to keep the best men and the best races straight . . But this insane jealousy of the whiteman I can never sympathize with : It is neither patriotic nor candid. It is simply ignorant and puerile. A moment's inward glance at the source of our most energizing ideas, the slightest enquiry into the derivation of our physical enjoyments---of what we eat, or drink, or wear, or sleep in, or write with, the houses we live in, the furniture we use---ought to be sufficient to disabuse every honest Indian of this unfortunate prejudice." Happy would it be for the dominant race and happier still for its great dependency if all Dr. Mookerjee's countrymen who aspire to form public opinion were actuated by such sentiments as these.---F. H. Skrine, c. s., in the *National Magazine* for October, 1887.

Dr. S. C. Mookerjee, the editor of what is undoubtedly one of the ablest papers in the country in point of literary power, is the author of a pleasant

little book of Travels in East Bengal..... The author is master of a racy style of English which many an Englishman may envy. Humourous description and caustic satire enliven every page. There is throughout a vigour and freshness of style that lends a charm to the veriest commonplace! If there were, however, a higher purpose in the publication of his book than to lighten the weary evening hours of the ordinary reader, we confess to a feeling that the author has failed in such an object. We are afraid there is not poetry enough in us to body forth in imagination the beauty of the scenes which the author has described in his voyages to and fro between Dacca and Tipperah. Humourist as he is Dr. Mookerjee will remind us of the words of the poet that the point of a "jest lies more in the ear of him that hears it than in the tongue of him that utters it." As with the jest so is it with the description. We do not say that the charge is unfounded. Prosaic as we are, drudging away at the desk, perhaps it is that we lack capacity to follow in imagination what the author has doubtless delineated with an admirable pen.

One of the chief impressions that a reader will

receive from a glance at the book is the somewhat strained relation between the Babus and the Anglo-Indians. The author pours a flood of ridicule upon the lordly airs of our "rulers." He hits hard indeed in his account of the Colonel at whist enduring a Babqo looking on, when on board the steamer, and of the whiteman's condescension in bowing to the black nigger. Happily we in the South are not so badly off in our commerce with the representatives of Western civilization. In spite of several instances of conflict and misunderstanding Englishmen and Hindus pull on agreeably together. But the author, notwithstanding his involuntary feeling of aloofness from the European, is no stranger to the blessings for which the West has laid us in debt. He has a keen appreciation of the enjoyments of this Westernized life of ours. He looks for ever forward and casts no longing lingering look behind at the things with which we have shaken hands and parted. His heart is in the continuance of British supremacy in the East. And agitation is his utmost weapon for the maintenance of his rights. But he will have nothing with spurious agitation. We extract below a paragraph of excellent advice to his brethren of the press.

The author recounts his adventure with the Railway officials of Sealdah with considerable humour. We feel an irresistible temptation to quote it *in extenso*, but space forbids. How the greenback was no legal tender, why silver of the Calcutta mint was wanted and how the currency question stood stiff and frowning despite the Editors and magistrates who had accompanied the author to bid him good-bye at the station, and how again with the advent of the Justice of the Peace all objection to receiving the currency-note vanished, are all narrated in a style that is fittingly characterized only by the word "delightful." In another place the author introduces the reader to the Hindu belief in the auspicious hour for starting on a journey in language of such playful raillery that we make no apology for quoting it. [Extract.]

The untoward circumstance of the day, the event to which we have already alluded, namely the refusal of the Railway officials to receive the currency-note in payment of the fare, elicits the following humourous confession of human weakness. [Extract.]

The author has some trenchant criticism on the isolation of the Englishman, which makes him in-

accessible to the complaints of extortion or plunder by their menials. They are too absorbed to know all that passes about them and the wrongs that are committed in their names are unnoticed as mere trifles for they have rarely any idea of their magnitude. It is only too well known throughout the country how blackmail in the shape of money or provisions is levied upon the inhabitants when the Collector is on tour. It would be difficult to believe the thing could go on under his very nose without his connivance if we did not know his exclusiveness and his distaste for mixing with the people.

The author devotes the greater part of the book to a description of the people and the external aspect of the country that he passed through in his two trips to Tipperah from Calcutta and back. He has a good deal to say about the customs of some of the people he becomes acquainted with. He makes a discovery of the debris of a Portuguese Colony in Tipperah that has become debased in morality and sunk in superstition. Although there is not much in the book that is instructive to the serious student, the grace of diction and the ease of style carry the reader pleasantly through. It would be difficult to

rescue such a subject as he has chosen from dulness without his extraordinary command of language. We cannot promise more than a brief span of life to the book. It will prove what is abundantly clear to the readers of the *Reis and Rayyet* that the author is an adept in English composition. He is a lover of nature and he paints scenes and situations with an artist's pencil.—*The Hindu*, Nov. 7, 1887.

.....this interesting book. We are justified in so terming it, not on account of any romantic adventures that the author has to relate, nor of any very new discoveries in geography or natural history. There is something particular as regards ethnology ; and a great deal of human nature in the book, shown to the reader with a simplicity and candour which bear testimony to its truth. Called from the busy haunts of men in the city to dwell for a time in Independent Tipperah as a judicious adviser to its chief, Doctor Mookerjee relates his adventures during the several journies to and fro in that capacity, without revealing the secrets of the State, like a good diplomatist. He has adhered strictly to the advice which he offers to his brethren of the Native press, and has written what

he saw and knows, without revealing all, considering what he might properly say and what withhold..... The above seems to be a curious passage to be found in a book of travels, and appears to have no connection with the subject. But it arises from a casual reference to a slaughter house, and a writer who "thundered weekly against the outrage of locating shambles in the immediate vicinity of a Hindoo temple"—where, in fact, no temple could be said to exist. Hence, the doctor advises his fellow-scribes not to be Pharisees, righteous over much, but to look and be sure of their facts. In the same spirit, he has written his book. He gives an account of his travels, which seem often to have been voyages, upon the wide-spreading rivers of Eastern Bengal which in the rains become almost inland seas. On these he philosophises on the nature of the country and the people, making careful observation of his facts; and though he sometimes fancies he knows better than his boatmen, and more than suspects that they are getting the better of him, he submits with a grace that would have done credit to Socrates, and accepts the apparently inevitable in the interests of peace. The doctor is a close observer of nature, animate and inanimate, with an

eye to the picturesque as well as to the sublime and beautiful. And although there is a vein of cynicism running through many of his observations, it is tempered by such evident good nature, that even a stranger would conceive him to be a laughter-loving rather than a stern philosopher. This is evident in his description of his boatmen and others, while he denounces the lawlessness which has made the poor fishermen suspicious even of honest intentions, because they have so long been the helpless victims of marauders stronger than themselves. Their only defence is flight or deceit, and the latter is their justification as a mode of self-protection. We are shown not only the weakness of the people, but the shortcomings of the administration that leave these things possible..... The author is impartial in his censures..... There is much in the book to which space forbids us to refer. That it is not a prosy one may be gathered from the fact that, for its 300 pages, there are nearly as many index references. Many of the subjects are necessarily but lightly treated, but all sensibly and fairly. And Dr. Mookerjee is such a master of the English language that in the whole book we have scarcely found a phrase that might not have

been written by an Englishman "to the manor born." There is nothing in it at which any one could reasonably take offence; and there is much from which both Englishmen and natives may learn greatly-needed lessons.—*The Indian Daily News*, Nov. 22, 1887.

TRAVELS IN BENGAL. Such is the title of a most interesting little work published a short time ago. Its author is Baboo Sambhu Chunder Mookerjee the well-known Editor of the *Reis and Rayyet*, the most original, cleverly-written and interesting journal in India. Baboo Sambhu Chunder is one of the veteran Indian writers in English. He is the master of a most happy, racy pleasant style, which you can easily make out from amongst the writings of a hundred different men. In racy humorous writing Baboo Sambhu Chunder has no rival among his Indian contemporaries. He won his first laurels, we believe, by his writings in his own periodical, the *Mookerjee's Magazine*, now long-defunct. In this magazine articles of great learning and excellence appeared, mostly from the pen of Baboo Sambhu Chunder. He has written several other booklets. His *Causes of the Mutiny*; *Mr. Wilson*, *Lord Canning*

and the Income Tax; the *Career of an Indian Princess, Her Highness the late Secundra Begum of Bhopal*; and the *Prince in India and to India* are publications which attracted considerable notice. His production "Travels in Bengal" is a work of great merit. It is at once a most faithful and interesting picture of natural scenery and life in Bengal, although Mr. Mookerjee does not profess to write a picture of Bengal life and uses his pencil in its portraiture only in passing. The dedication is characteristic. [Extract.]

The "Travels" are travels in East Bengal, travels and voyages between Calcutta and Indepedent Tipperah. We do not believe many people in this side of India know that there is such an independent State as Tipperah. But nevertheless such a state exists. We will give here a summary of its history in the words of Mr. Mookerjee. He writes:—[Extract.] Mr. Mookerjee was Dewan of Independent Tipperah for some five years in all between 1877 and 1881. The Travels are an account of his voyages to and from Tipperah.

Those who have travelled in Bengal, particularly in its Eastern districts, which are the districts described in Mookerjee's book, will bear him out in his

statement that Lower Bengal is not stale, flat and unprofitable, that, on the contrary, she is the beautifullest country in the world. She has no high mountains, but she has rivers apparently as vast as the sea, to make her scenery grand and majestic. She has a hundred rivers ever overflowing with water, thousands of transparent lakes covered with the lily and a hundred beautiful water-flowers, thousands of seas of ever-waving paddy fields, thousands of clusters of bamboo and of great trees dressed in beautiful creepers adorning the river banks, to make her the loveliest country in the world. Even a Bengali needs to see and travel Bengal to adequately know her thousand witching charms. For a foreigner it is well nigh impossible to get even an approximate idea of what they are like from description, however true and faithful. Let us hear what our author has to say on the subject. We read :—[Extract.] A paddy sea is thus inimitably described :—[Extract.]

We will quote a passage of another character :—[Extract.]

We could cull many such gems. But space forbids it. We will, however, quote some passages of another kind. Our traveller, though old in years, is

evidently young in heart, for no one in the romantic age of youth could be more appreciative of female charms than our traveller. In every other page you find our author describing in terms of enthusiasm some rural girl or woman of beauty. [Extract.] In the next page we find our traveller's attention [Extract.]

There is the description, physical and moral, of a Colonel, which we cannot resist the temptation of reproducing, although the article has already exceeded the usual length. [Extract.]

We have now given extracts enough to show that the little book of travels is most delightful reading. It contains graphic descriptions of natural scenery, faithful portraiture of men and manners, and happy, good humoured observations on them. There is not an ill-natured or unkind word in the whole book—it overflows in every page with the milk of human kindness. Every observation testifies to the author being a keen observer of men and things, as an example of which we can mention the instructive and interesting chapter on the Native Christians of Portuguese extraction in Tipperah. Again, although the book does not pretend to deal with life in Bengal, the

glimpses of that life we find in it are very considerable and pleasant. We will now conclude by recommending the book to all who may wish to spend a few hours amidst happy thoughts and pleasant pictures.

S. K. C.

-- *The Tribune*, Nov., 26, 1887.

If we have not before noticed Mr. Sambhu C. Mookerjee's *Travels in Bengal*, which was published some months ago, it is not because the little book is either dull or pointless. It contains, on the contrary, much interesting matter, though some of the incidents are over-weighted with detail in what is facetiously called a "little booklet." The author's view as a rule is, by the way, facetious: he is given even to punning; but he is also sentimental in the highest degree---"a naked Whiteman" hurts his susceptibilities; a Hindu girl, bathing in the river, throws him into an ecstasy of delight: "she had such large languishing eyes!" But he is nothing if not philosophical, and his reflections on this or that social and political subject are not without their moral. Mr. Sambhu C. Mookerjee was formerly

Minister" to the "last of the Nawabs Nazim of Bengal, Behar and Orissa" and afterwards Minister of the Maharaja of Tipperah. He is a man, therefore, of experience, and when he speaks his brethren should listen to him.....

Travels in Bengal is a readable book, and it abounds in anecdotes which are often as instructive as amusing, and it is not spoiled by too many political allusions, though, of course, some few have crept in.---*The Pioneer*, Dec., 1887.